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THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

By

JOSEPH STALIN

A Collection of Articles & Speeches

CO-OPERATIVE PUBLISHING SOCIETY
OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN THE U.S.S.R.
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THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

BY JOSEPH STALIN

This Booklet consists of a collection of chronologically arranged articles covering a period extending from the first to the eleventh anniversary of the October Revolution (1918-1928). They contain a brilliant Marxist-Leninist analysis of events that led up to the Revolution and of the strategy and tactics of the Bolsheviks during the preparations for and the carrying out of the Revolution, exposing the false theories propagated both at that time and subsequently by Trotsky. The author also analyses the class forces that obtained immediately before and during the insurrection and the subsequent Civil War, with particular reference to the questions of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, dealing also with the national question and the international significance of the October Revolution

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THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

THE national question is not something that is self-sufficient, fixed once for all time. Being only part of the general question of the transformation of the existing order of society, the national question is wholly determined by the conditions of the social environment, the character of the government of the country and, generally, by the whole course of social development. This is particularly noticeable during revolutionary epochs, when the national question and the national movement rapidly change their content in full view of everyone, according to the course and outcome of the revolution.

I. THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

In the epoch of the bourgeois revolution in Russia (dating from February 1917) the national movement in the borderlands bore the character of a bourgeois emancipatory movement. The nationalities of Russia, for ages oppressed and exploited by the "old regime," now for the first time felt that they possessed strength and hurled themselves into the combat with their oppressors. "Liquidate national oppression" was the slogan of the movement. The borderlands of Russia were instantly covered with "all-national" institutions. The movement was headed by the national bourgeois-democratic intelligentsia. "National Councils" in Latvia, in the Esthonian region, in Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, in the cities of the Caucasus, in Kirghizstan and the Middle Volga region; the "Rada" in the Ukraine and in White Russia; "Sfatul Tarei" in Bessarabia; "Kurultai" in the Crimea and in Bashkiria; the "Autonomous Government" in Tur-

kestan—such were the "all-national" institutions around which the national bourgeoisie was gathering strength. The question at issue was emancipation from tsarism as the "basic cause" of national oppression, and the formation of national bourgeois states. The right of nations to self-determination was interpreted to mean the right of the national bourgeoisie in the borderlands to take power into its own hands and make use of the February Revolution for the purpose of forming its "own" national state. The above-mentioned bourgeois institutions did not contemplate and could not contemplate developing the revolution further. At the same time it was overlooked that naked, barefaced imperialism was coming to take the place of tsarism, and that this imperialism was a stronger and more dangerous enemy of nationalities. was the basis of a new national oppression.

The abolition of tsarism and the coming into power of the bourgeoisie did not, however, lead to the abolition of national oppression. The old, coarse form of national oppression gave way to a new, refined, yet more dangerous, form of oppression. The government of Lvov-Miliukov-Kerensky not only did not break with the policy of national oppression but organized a new campaign against Finland (dispersion of the Sejm in the summer of 1917) and the Ukraine (destruction of the cultural institutions of the Ukraine). More than that. This government, imperialist by nature, called on the population to continue the war in order to subjugate new lands, new colonies and nationalities. It was impelled to take this course not only by its intrinsic imperialist character but also by the existence of the old imperialist states in Western Europe which were irresistibly endeavouring to subjugate new lands and nationalities and threatened to constrict its sphere of influence. A struggle by the imperialist states to subjugate the small nationalities as a condition of the existence of these states was the picture revealed in the course of the imperialist war. The annihilation of tsarism and the appearance on the scene of the Miliukov-Kerensky government wrought virtually no improvement in this ungainly picture. Naturally, in so far as the "all-national" institutions in the borderlands displayed a tendency towards political independence, they encountered the irresistible

opposition of the imperialist government of Russia. However, in so far as they consolidated the power of the national bourgeoisie and remained deaf to the vital interests of "their own" workers and peasants, they evoked grumbling and discontent among the latter. The so-called "national regiments" only poured oil on the flames: they were powerless as against the danger from above, and merely intensified and aggravated the danger from below. The "all-national" institutions were left without defence against the blows dealt from without as well as against an explosion within. The budding bourgeois national states began to fade before blossom-time.

Thus the old bourgeois-democratic interpretation of the principle of self-determination became a fiction and lost its revolutionary meaning. In such conditions there could clearly be no question of the abolition of national oppression and of the independence of small and national states. It was becoming obvious that the liberation of the toiling masses of the oppressed nationalities and the abolition of national oppression were inconceivable without a break with imperialism, without overthrowing "one's own" national bourgeoisie and without the seizure of power by the toiling masses themselves.

This became especially apparent after the October Revolution.

II. The October Revolution and the National Question

The February Revolution concealed in its bosom irreconcilable inner contradictions. The revolution was accomplished through the efforts of workers and peasants (soldiers), whereas, as a result of the revolution, power passed, not to the workers and peasants, but to the bourgeoisie. By making the revolution the workers and peasants wanted to put an end to the war, wanted to secure peace, whereas the bourgeoisie, which assumed power, strove to use the revolutionary ardour of the masses to continue the war, was against peace. The economic ruin of the country and the food crisis demanded the expropriation of capital and of the industrial enterprises for the benefit of the workers, the confiscation of the landlord estates for the benefit of the peasants, whereas

the bourgeois Miliukov-Kerensky government was standing guard over the interests of the landlords and capitalists, resolutely protecting the latter against attack by workers or peasants. That was a bourgeois revolution, effected at the hands of the workers and peasants for the benefit of "their own" exploiters.

Meanwhile the country continued to groan under the burden of the imperialist war, of economic disintegration and of the collapse of the food supply. The front was falling to pieces and was fast melting away. Factories and mills were stopping work. Famine was on the increase in the country. The February Revolution with its inner contradictions proved obviously inadequate to "save the country." The Miliukov-Kerensky government proved obviously incapable of solving the basic problems of the revolution.

A new, *socialist* revolution was necessary to lead the country out of the impasse of imperialist war and economic ruin.

This revolution came about as a result of the October insurrection.

By overthrowing the power of the landlords and the bourgeoisie and placing a government of the workers and peasants in its stead, the October Revolution at one blow solved the contradictions of the February Revolution. The abolition of landlord-kulak omnipotence and the transfer of the use of the land to the toiling masses of the villages; the expropriation of the factories and mills, and their transfer to the management of the workers; the break with imperialism and the termination of the predatory war; the publication of the secret treaties and the exposure of the policy of foreign territorial annexations; finally the proclamation of self-determination for the toiling masses of the oppressed nations and the recognition of the independence of Finland constitute the principal measures carried into effect by the Soviet government in the course of the revolution.

This was a truly *socialist* revolution.

The revolution which started at the centre could not be long confined to the narrow territory of the central area. After being victorious at the centre, it was absolutely bound to spread to the border regions. And, indeed, the revolutionary wave, from the

very first days of the revolution spread from the North throughout the whole of Russia, engulfing one borderland after another. However, here it struck a rampart in the form of the "national councils" and regional "governments" (Don, Kuban, Siberia) which had been formed prior to October. The fact of the matter was that these "national governments" would not hear of a socialist revolution. Bourgeois by nature, they had no intention whatever of destroying the old bourgeois world; on the contrary, they considered it their duty to exert all their energy to preserve and consolidate it. Imperialist in essence, they had not the slightest intention of breaking with imperialism; on the contrary, they were never averse to capturing and subjugating bits and morsels of "foreign" nationalities, whenever an opportunity to do so presented itself. No wonder then that these "national governments" in the borderlands declared war on the socialist government at the centre. Once they had declared war, they naturally became hotbeds of reaction, to which everything counter-revolutionary in Russia gravitated. It is no secret to anyone that all the counter-revolutionaries cast out of Russia rushed to these hotbeds, and that there, around these hotbeds, they formed whiteguard "national" regiments.

However, in addition to "national" governments, the borderlands also have national workers and peasants. Even before the October Revolution they were organized in their own revolutionary Soviets of Deputies, after the model of the Soviet of Deputies obtaining in the central parts of Russia, and never severed their connections with their brothers in the North. They, too, strove for victory over the bourgeoisie; they, too, fought for the triumph of socialism. No wonder the conflict between them and "their own" national governments increased from day to day. The October Revolution only consolidated the alliance between the workers and peasants of the borderlands and the workers and peasants of Russia, inspiring them with faith in the triumph of socialism. And the war of the "national governments" against the Soviet government brought their conflict with these "governments" to a complete break with them, brought them to open rebellion against them.

Thus was formed the socialist alliance between the workers and

peasants of all Russia against the counter-revolutionary alliance of the national-bourgeois "governments" of Russia's borderlands.

Some people depict the struggle of the borderland "governments" as a struggle for national liberation and against the "soulless centralism" of the Soviet government. This, however, is wrong. No government in the world ever granted such extensive decentralization, no government in the world ever afforded its peoples such plenary national freedom as does the Soviet government of Russia. The struggle of the borderland "governments" was and remains a struggle of the bourgeois counter-revolution against socialism. The national flag is tacked on to the cause only to deceive the masses, only as a popular flag which conveniently covers up the counter-revolutionary designs of the national bourgeoisie.

However, the struggle of the "national" and regional "governments" proved to be an unequal struggle. Attacked from two quarters—from without by the Soviet government, and from within by "their own" workers and peasants—the "national governments" had to retreat after the very first battles. The uprising of the Finnish workers and agricultural labourers and the flight of the bourgeois "Senate"; the uprising of the Ukrainian workers and peasants and the flight of the bourgeois "Rada"; the uprising of the workers and peasants in the Don region, in Kuban, in Siberia and the downfall of Kaledin, of Kornilov and of the Siberian "government"; the uprising of the poor of Turkestan and the flight of the "autonomous government"; the agrarian revolution in the Caucasus and the utter helplessness of the "national councils" of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan—these are facts of common knowledge demonstrating the complete isolation of the borderland "governments" from "their own" masses. Having been completely defeated, the "national governments" were "forced" to appeal to the imperialists of Western Europe, to the age-long oppressors and exploiters of the small nations of the whole world, for aid against "their own" workers and peasants.

Such was the beginning of the period of foreign intervention in, and occupation of, the borderlands—a period revealing once more the counter-revolutionary nature of the "national" and regional "governments."

Only now has it become obvious to all that the national bourgeoisie is striving not for the liberation of "its own people" from national oppression but for the liberty of wringing profits from it, for the liberty of preserving its own privileges and capital.

Only now has it become obvious that the liberation of the oppressed nationalities is inconceivable without breaking with imperialism, without overthrowing the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations, without power passing into the hands of the toiling masses of those nationalities.

Thus the old bourgeois conception of the principle of self-determination with the slogan "All Power to the National Bourgeoisie" was exposed and rejected by the very course of the revolution. The socialist conception of self-determination with the slogan "All Power to the Toiling Masses of the Oppressed Nations" obtained full recognition and opportunity of application.

Thus the October Revolution, after putting an end to the old bourgeois emancipatory national movement, inaugurated the era of a new socialist movement of the workers and peasants of the oppressed nations, directed against all—which signifies also national—oppression, against the rule of the bourgeoisie, whether "its own" or foreign, against imperialism in general.

III. The International Importance of the October Revolution

After being victorious in the central part of Russia and taking possession of a number of borderlands, the October Revolution could not stop short at the territorial boundaries of Russia. In the atmosphere of imperialist world war and general discontent among the lower classes, it could not but spread to the neighbouring countries. The break with imperialism and the liberation of Russia from the predatory war, the publication of the secret treaties and the solemn abrogation of the policy of seizing foreign soil, the proclamation of national freedom and the recognition of the independence of Finland, the declaration of Russia as a "Federation of Soviet National Republics" and the militant battle-cry of a resolute struggle against imperialism broadcast all

over the world by the Soviet government in millions of pamphlets, newspapers and leaflets in the mother tongues of the peoples of the East and West—all this could not fail to have its effect on the enslaved East and the bleeding West.

And, in truth, the October Revolution is the first revolution in the history of the world that has broken the sleep of centuries of the toiling masses of the oppressed nations of the East and drawn them into the struggle against world imperialism. The formation of workers' and peasants' soviets in Persia, China and India, modeled after the soviets in Russia, is sufficiently convincing proof of this.

The October Revolution is the first revolution in the world that provided the workers and peasants of the West with a living and salutary example and urged them on to the path of real liberation from the yoke of war and imperialism. The uprising of the workers and soldiers in Austria-Hungary and Germany, the formation of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the revolutionary struggle of the nations of Austria-Hungary against national oppression are quite eloquent proofs of this.

That the struggle in the East and even in the West has not yet succeeded in shedding the bourgeois-nationalist features is not at all the point at issue—the point is that the struggle against imperialism *has begun*, that it goes on and is inevitably bound to reach its logical termination.

Foreign intervention and the policy of occupation pursued by the "foreign" imperialists only intensify the revolutionary crisis, drawing new nations into the struggle and extending the area of revolutionary clashes with imperialism.

Thus the October Revolution, by establishing ties between the nations of the backward East and the advanced West, draws them together into the joint camp of the struggle against imperialism.

The national question thus grows from the partial question of struggling against national oppression to the general question of liberating the nations, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism.

The mortal sin of the Second International and its leader Kautsky consists incidentally in this: that they were always devi-

ating towards a bourgeois conception of national self-determination, that they did not understand the revolutionary meaning of the latter, that they did not know how or did not want to put the national question on the revolutionary basis of an open struggle against imperialism, that they did not know how or did not want to link the national question to the question of liberating the colonies.

The thick-headedness of the Austrian Social-Democrats of the type of Bauer and Renner consists indeed in that they failed to understand the indissoluble bond between the national question and the question of power, and tried to separate the national question from politics and confine it within the scope of cultural and educational questions, oblivious of the existence of such "trifles" as imperialism and the colonies enslaved by it.

It is said that the principles of self-determination and of the "defence of the fatherland" have been abrogated by the very course of events in the conditions of an ascendent socialist revolution. In fact it is not self-determination and the "defence of the fatherland" that have been abrogated, but their bourgeois interpretation. It is sufficient to cast a glance at the occupied regions, languishing under the yoke of imperialism and yearning for liberation; sufficient to cast a glance at Russia conducting a revolutionary war for the defence of the socialist fatherland against the pirates of imperialism; sufficient to ponder the events that are now transpiring in Austria-Hungary; sufficient to glance at the enslaved colonies and semi-colonies, that have already organized soviets in their respective countries (India, Persia, China)—one need but cast a glance at all this to realize the full revolutionary significance of the principle of self-determination in its socialist interpretation.

Indeed the great international importance of the October Revolution consists mainly in that this revolution:

1) has widened the scope of the national question, transforming it from a partial question of struggling against national oppression into a general question of liberating the oppressed nations, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism;

2) has ushered in vast opportunities and disclosed the actual

means for this liberation, thus considerably facilitating the task of the oppressed nations of the West and East to accomplish their liberation and drawing them into the common channel of a victorious struggle against imperialism;

3) has thereby erected a bridge between the socialist West and the enslaved East, by setting up a new front of revolutions extending from the proletarians of the West on through the Russian Revolution to the oppressed nations of the East *against* world imperialism.

This, in effect, explains the indescribable enthusiasm now displayed by the toiling and exploited masses of the East and West with regard to the Russian proletariat.

This largely explains the brutal fury with which the imperialist robbers of the whole world have hurled themselves against Soviet Russia.

Pravda, Nos. 241 and 250, November 6 and 19, 1918.

THE LOGIC OF EVENTS

Apropos the "Theses" of the Central Committee of the Mensheviks

A DOCUMENT entitled *Theses and Resolution of the Central Committee* of the Menshevik Party (October 17-21, 1918) has been delivered to us. This document sums up the activity of the Soviet government since October 1917 and constructs a certain perspective which apparently is of considerable importance for the development of the Menshevik Party. But the most valuable feature of the document is the conclusions which upset the entire practice of the Mensheviks during this past year of revolution. While postponing an analysis of these "theses and resolutions" to another occasion, we deem it necessary, at the present time, to share some of our impressions with our readers.

I. THE OCTOBER UPRISING

It happened exactly a year ago. The country was groaning under the burden of the imperialist war and economic ruin. The weary, long-suffering front had no strength left to carry on the fight. Yet, the British imperialists (Buchanan!) were enmeshing the country more and more, striving by every means to hold it within the sphere of the imperialist war. Riga was surrendered and preparations were being made to surrender Petrograd, only to prove the necessity of the war and of a military dictatorship. The bourgeoisie understood all this and was openly heading for a military dictatorship to smash the revolution.

What were the Bolsheviks doing at that time?

The Bolsheviks were preparing for the insurrection. They believed that the seizure of power by the proletariat was the only way out of the deadlock of war and economic ruin. In their opin-

ion, a break with imperialism and the liberation of Russia from its claws would be inconceivable without such an insurrection. They summoned the Congress of Soviets which they considered the sole successor to power in the land. First, revolution—then peace!

What were the Mensheviks doing at that time?

They declared the "venture" of the Bolsheviks to be "counter-revolutionary adventurism." They regarded the Congress of Soviets as unnecessary and hampered it; the soviets themselves they characterized as "antiquated frame-houses" doomed to demolition. In place of the "frame-house" soviets, they proposed a "solid building" after the "European" fashion—a Pre-Parliament, in which they, in common with the Miliukovs, were working out plans for "radical agrarian and economic reforms." Instead of a break with imperialism, they proposed a conference of the Allies in Paris as a possible way out of the war. In the participation of the Menshevik Skobelev in such a conference and in the doubtful machinations of the Menshevik Axelrod in connection with the convocation of a congress of the Scheidemanns, Renaudels and Hyndmans they saw a "consistent policy of peace."

A year has passed since then. The "Bolshevik insurrection" has swept away the crafty artifice of the domestic and foreign imperialists. The old imperialist war has been relegated to the realm of reminiscences as far as Russia is concerned. Russia has freed itself from the voluntary yoke of imperialism. It follows and expects to follow its own independent foreign policy. It is now perfectly obvious to all that without the October Revolution Russia would not have emerged from the impasse of the imperialist war, the peasants would not have obtained the land and the workers would not be managing mills and factories.

What then are the Mensheviks of the Central Committee telling us now? Just listen:

> The Bolshevik revolution of October 1917 has been historically necessary, inasmuch as it severed the bond that connected the toiling masses with the capitalist classes and thereby expressed the endeavour of these toiling masses to steer the course of the revolution wholly in their interest, without which the liberation of Russia from the vise of Allied imperialism, the pursuit of a consistent policy of peace, the execution in a radical manner of

the agrarian reform and the regulation by the state of the whole economic life in the interests of the masses of the people would have been inconceivable, since this stage of the revolution exhibited the tendency of enhancing also the sweeping effect which the Russian Revolution had on the course of events making for peace. *(Cf. Theses and Resolution.)*

That is how the Menshevik Central Committee talks now.

Incredible, but true. "The Bolshevik revolution" has been "historically necessary," "without which the liberation of Russia from the vise of Allied imperialism," "the pursuit of a consistent policy of peace," "the execution, in a radical manner, of the agrarian reform" and "the regulation by the state of the whole economic life in the interests of the masses of the people would have been inconceivable."

But surely this is precisely what the Bolsheviks kept repeating over and over again a year ago, and what the Menshevik Central Committee was attacking furiously!

Yes, exactly identical.

Life teaches and corrects even the most incorrigible, doesn't it? It is all-powerful, and always has its way regardless of everything.

II. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat

It happened about ten months ago. The Constituent Assembly was about to meet. The utterly routed bourgeois counter-revolutionaries were again summoning their strength and rubbing their hands, were looking forward with relish to the "demise" of Soviet rule. The foreign imperialist (Allied) press was welcoming the Constituent Assembly. The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries were organizing "private" meetings and working out a plan to transfer power from the Soviets to the Constituent Assembly, the "lord of the Russian land." The shadow of a recrudescence of the "honest coalition" and of the liquidation of the Bolshevik "mistakes" was in the air.

What were the Bolsheviks doing at that time?

They continued the work they had already begun of consolidating the rule of the proletariat. They thought that the "honest coalition" and its organ, the bourgeois-democratic Constituent Assembly, were doomed by history, for they knew that a new

power was born into the world—the rule of the proletariat, as well as a new form of government—the Republic of the Soviets. At the beginning of 1917, the slogan of the Constituent Assembly was progressive and the Bolsheviks espoused it. At the end of 1917, after the October insurrection, the slogan of the Constituent Assembly became reactionary, for it ceased to correspond to the relationship of the contending political forces in the country. The Bolsheviks thought that under the conditions of the imperialist war in Europe and the victorious proletarian revolution in Russia, only two kinds of regimes were conceivable: the dictatorship of the proletariat which assumed the form of the Republic of Soviets, or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in the form of a military dictatorship—that any attempt to find a middle course and to revive the Constituent Assembly would inevitably lead to a return to the old, to reaction, to the liquidation of the October conquests. The Bolsheviks did not doubt that bourgeois parliamentarism and the bourgeois-democratic republic represented a past stage of the revolution. . . .

Ten months have elapsed since. The Constituent Assembly, which attempted to do away with Soviet rule, has been dissolved. The peasants in the country did not even feel this dissolution, while the workers greeted it with rejoicing. One part of the supporters of the Constituent Assembly left for the Ukraine and called upon the German imperialists to help them fight the Soviets. Another section of the partisans of the Constituent Assembly went to the Caucasus and found peace in the embraces of the Turco-German imperialists. A third section of the partisans of the Constituent Assembly went to Samara and, jointly with the Anglo-French imperialists, waged war on the workers and peasants of Russia. The slogan of the Constituent Assembly was thus transformed into a means of catching political simpletons and into a flag covering domestic and foreign counter-revolutionaries in their struggle against the Soviets.

How did the Mensheviks behave during that period?

They fought against the Soviet government all the time supporting the slogan of a Constituent Assembly, which had become a counter-revolutionary slogan.

What do the Mensheviks of the Central Committee have to say to us now? Listen:

It "rejects all political collaboration with classes hostile to democracy, and refuses to participate in any government combination, based on an 'all-national' coalition of democracy and the capitalist bourgeoisie, or on dependence on foreign imperialism and militarism, even though such combination wrap itself in a democratic flag." *(Cf. Theses.)*

And further on:

All attempts by revolutionary democracy, which relies on the urban non-proletarian masses and the rural toiling masses, to restore the democratic republic by an armed struggle against the Soviet government and the masses supporting it were and are accompanied, owing to the character of the international situation and the political immaturity of the Russian democratic petty bourgeoisie, by such a regrouping of social forces as undermines precisely the revolutionary significance of the struggle for the restoration of the democratic order and leads to direct jeopardy of the fundamental socialist conquests of the revolution. The endeavour to come to an agreement at all costs with the capitalist classes and to use foreign arms in the struggle for power deprives the policy of revolutionary democracy of all independence and turns it into a tool of these classes and of the imperialist coalitions. *(Cf. Theses and Resolution.)*

In brief: coalition is "rejected" definitely and unconditionally, the struggle for a democratic republic and for the Constituent Assembly is recognized as counter-revolutionary, for it "leads to direct jeopardy of the fundamental socialist conquests of the revolution."

Only one conclusion can be drawn from this: the regime of the Soviets, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is the only conceivable revolutionary regime in Russia.

But surely this is precisely what the Bolsheviks long ago kept repeating over and over again and what the Mensheviks were opposing only yesterday.

Yes, precisely the same thing.

The logic of events is stronger than any other logic, not excluding that of the Mensheviks, isn't it?

III. The Petty-Bourgeois Tangle

Thus:

It is a fact that after a year of struggle against the "adventurism" of the Bolsheviks, the Menshevik Central Committee is

compelled to recognize the "historical necessity" of the "Bolshevik revolution" in October, 1917.

It is a fact that after a long struggle for the Constituent Assembly and an "honest" coalition, the Menshevik Central Committee, reluctant and resisting, was none the less forced to admit the worthlessness of an "all-national" coalition and the counter-revolutionary nature of the struggle for the "restoration of the democratic order" and of the Constituent Assembly.

True, that admission came a year too late, after the truth concerning the counter-revolutionary character of the Constituent Assembly slogan and the historical necessity of the October Revolution has become a trite commonplace—a delay altogether unbecoming the Menshevik Central Committee which lays claim to the leading role in the revolution. However, such is the lot of the Mensheviks: it is not the first time they trail behind the course of events and, we suppose, it will not be the last time they attempt to disport themselves in old Bolshevik trousers. . . .

One might imagine that after such an admission on the part of the Central Committee of the Mensheviks there ought to be no room left for any disagreement of a serious nature. And this indeed would have been the case, if we had to deal not with the Menshevik Central Committee but with consistent revolutionaries, who know how to reason things out to the end and are capable of drawing logical conclusions. However, that is just the trouble, that we have to deal in this instance with a party of petty-bourgeois intellectuals, who forever waver between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between revolution and counter-revolution. Hence the inevitable contradictions between words and deeds, the perpetual uncertainty and vacillation of thought.

Just marvel at the following. As you see, the Menshevik Central Committee

> . . . continues to regard the sovereignty of the people, absolutely unlimited democracy, as the only political form in which the social liberation of the proletariat can both be prepared and realized. It regards the democratic republic organized by a freely elected, sovereign Constituent Assembly, by universal and equal suffrage, etc., not only as an absolutely indispensable weapon of the political education of these masses and of the class-consolidation of the proletariat under the banner of its own interests, but also as

the only ground on which the socialist proletariat can develop its creative social activities. *(Cf. Theses and Resolution.)*

It is incredible but true. On the one hand, a "struggle for the restoration of the democratic order . . . leads," so it turns out, "to direct jeopardy of the fundamental socialist conquests of the revolution," owing to which this struggle is declared counter-revolutionary; on the other hand, the Central Committee of the Mensheviks "continues" to declare itself in favour of a "sovereign Constituent Assembly" which has already been buried! Or, perhaps, the Menshevik Central Committee imagines that it will obtain a "Constituent Assembly" without an "armed struggle"? In such event what becomes of the "historical necessity of the Bolshevik Revolution," which has completely discarded the "sovereign Constituent Assembly"?

Or, take this. The Central Committee of the Mensheviks demands neither more nor less than

"the abrogation of the extraordinary organs of police repression and the extraordinary tribunals" and the "cessation of the political and economic terror." *(Cf. Theses and Resolution.)*

On the one hand, there is a recognition of the "historical necessity" of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is calculated to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie; on the other hand, there is a demand for the sheathing of some extremely important weapons of power, without which this suppression is altogether unthinkable! In such event what is to become of the conquests of the October Revolution, against which the bourgeoisie is fighting with all its might, going as far as to organize acts of terrorism and highwaymen's conspiracies? How is it possible to recognize the "historical necessity" of the October Revolution and yet fail to recognize the inevitable results and consequences which flow from it?

Will the Menshevik Central Committee ever extricate itself from this knotty petty-bourgeois tangle?

IV. What Next?

Yet it does attempt to extricate itself from it. Listen to this:

"Endorsing the task of restoring the unity and independence of Russia

on the basis of the conquests of the revolution by democracy's own forces and thereby rejecting any interference by foreign capitalists in the internal affairs of Russia," the Menshevik Party "expresses its political solidarity with the Soviet government, in so far as it endorses the liberation of the territory of Russia particularly from foreign occupation and comes out against these attempts by non-proletarian democracy to extend or maintain this occupation. But this political solidarity, in regard to imperialist intervention, could lead to direct support of the military measures of the Soviet government for the liberation of the occupied territories of Russia only if this government really displayed readiness to frame its relations towards non-Bolshevik democracy in the borderlands on the basis of mutual agreement and not on the basis of suppression and terror." *(Cf. Theses and Resolution.)*

Thus from struggle against the Soviet government to "agreement" with it.

"Political solidarity with the Soviet government. . . ." We do not know the full extent of that solidarity, but is it necessary to state that the Bolsheviks will raise no objection to the solidarity of the Menshevik Central Committee with the Soviet government? We fully appreciate the difference between solidarity with the Soviet government and solidarity with, say, the members of the "Constituent Assembly" in Samara.

"Direct support of the military measures of the Soviet government. . . ." We do not know in what numbers the Menshevik Central Committee could place troops at the disposal of the Soviet government, with what military forces it could augment the Soviet army, but is there any need to prove that the Bolsheviks could only welcome military support for the Soviet government? We fully appreciate the very profound difference between military support of the Soviet government and participation by the Mensheviks in, let us say, the "Conference for Defence" during the imperialist war, under Kerensky.

All that is so. However, experience has taught us not to take people at their word; we are accustomed to judge parties and groups not only by their resolutions but above all by their deeds. And what are the deeds of the Mensheviks? To this day the Mensheviks in the Ukraine have not broken with the counter-revolutionary government of Skoropadsky, fighting as they do with all the means at their disposal against the Soviet elements of the Ukraine and thereby assisting the rule of the domestic and for-

eign imperialists in the South; the Mensheviks in the Caucasus long ago entered into an alliance with the landlords and capitalists, and on declaring a holy war on the partisans of the October Revolution called the German imperialists to their assistance; the Mensheviks in the Urals and Siberia, who made common cause with the Anglo-French imperialists, were actually assisting and continue to assist in the liquidation of the conquests of the October Revolution; the Mensheviks in Krassnovodsk opened the doors of the Transcaspian region to the British imperialists, facilitating their work of stamping out Soviet rule in Turkestan; finally, one section of the Mensheviks in European Russia proclaims the necessity of an "active" "struggle" against the Soviet government, organizes counter-revolutionary strikes in the rear of our army, which is shedding its blood in the war for the liberation of Russia, and thereby renders impracticable the "support of the military measures of the Soviet government" preached by the Menshevik Central Committee. All these anti-socialist and counter-revolutionary elements of Menshevism in the centre and in the borderlands of Russia to this moment continue to regard themselves as members of the Party of the Mensheviks, whose Central Committee now solemnly announces its "political solidarity" with the Soviet government. We ask:

1) What is the attitude of the Central Committee of the Party of the Mensheviks towards the above-mentioned counter-revolutionary elements of Menshevism?

2) Does it propose to break with them resolutely and irrevocably?

3) Has it taken a single step in this direction?

These are all questions to which we fail to find any answer in either the "Resolution" of the Central Committee of the Mensheviks or in the practice of the latter.

Yet, there is no doubt that only a decisive break with the counter-revolutionary elements of Menshevism could promote the realization of the "mutual agreement" now proclaimed by the Menshevik Central Committee.

Pravda, No. 234, October 29, 1918.

THE OCTOBER INSURRECTION

(October 24 and 25, 1917, in Petrograd)

THE following were the most important events which precipitated the October uprising: the intention of the Provisional Government (after the surrender of Riga) to surrender Petrograd; the preparations of the government to remove to Moscow; the decision of the army headquarters to transfer the entire Petrograd garrison to the front, leaving the capital defenceless, and finally the feverish activities of the Black Congress in Moscow, headed by Rodzyanko —working to organize a counter-revolution. All this in connection with the growing economic ruination and the unwillingness of the front to continue the war, determined the inevitability of a rapid and strictly organized uprising, as the only way out of the situation that had arisen.

As early as the end of September, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party decided to mobilize all the forces of the Party for the organization of a successful uprising. To this end the Central Committee decided to organize a Military-Revolutionary Committee in Petrograd, to contrive to have the Petrograd garrison left in the capital and to call an All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Such a congress could be the only successor to power. The preliminary winning-over of the Moscow and Petrograd Soviets, which exercised the greatest influence both in the rear and at the front, was absolutely part of the general plan in organizing the uprising.

The central organ of the Party, *Rabochy Put*,* *in* pursuance of the directions of the Central Committee, began openly to call for an uprising, preparing the workers and peasants for the decisive battle.

* *Workers' Path.—Ed.*

The first clash with the Provisional Government took place over the suppression of the *Rabochy Put.* By order of the Provisional Government, the paper was suppressed; by order of the Military-Revolutionary Committee it was re-started in a revolutionary fashion. The seals were torn off, the commissars of the Provisional Government were removed from their posts. This took place on October 24.

On October 24, in many of the most important government institutions, the commissars of the Military-Revolutionary Committee removed the representatives of the Provisional Government by force, as a result of which these institutions fell into the hands of the Military-Revolutionary Committee and the whole machinery of the Provisional Government was disorganized. During that day (October 24), the entire garrison, all regiments, definitely went over to the side of the Military-Revolutionary Committee—with the exception of only a few *Junker* schools * and the armoured car division. The Provisional Government displayed indecision in its conduct. Only in the evening did it begin to occupy the bridges with shock battalions, after managing to draw up some of them. In reply to this, the Military-Revolutionary Committee dispatched the sailors and the Vyborg Red Guardists, who, after removing and dispersing the shock battalions, occupied the bridges themselves. From this moment open insurrection began. Quite a number of regiments were dispatched with instructions to surround the entire area occupied by the military headquarters and the Winter Palace. The Provisional Government met at the Winter Palace. In going over to the side of the Military-Revolutionary Committee late during the night of October 24, the armoured car division accelerated the favourable issue of the uprising.

During the early morning of October 25, after bombarding the Winter Palace and the military headquarters, and after an exchange of shots between the Soviet troops and the *Junkers* before the Winter Palace, the Provisional Government surrendered.

* Officers' training school.—*Ed.*

On October 25 the Congress of Soviets opened. To it the Military-Revolutionary Committee transferred the state power which had been conquered.

From beginning to end the insurrection was inspired by the Central Committee of the Party, with Comrade Lenin at its head. Lenin at that time lived in Petrograd on the Vyborg side in a secret apartment. On October 24 in the evening, he was called out to Smolny to assume general charge of the movement. All practical work in connection with the organization of the uprising was done under the immediate direction of Comrade Trotsky, the president of the Petrograd Soviet. It can be stated with certainty that the Party is indebted primarily and principally to Comrade Trotsky for the rapid going over of the garrison to the side of the Soviet and the efficient manner in which the work of the Military-Revolutionary Committee was organized. The principal assistants of Comrade Trotsky were Comrades Antonov and Podvoisky.

The Baltic sailors and the Red Guardists from the Vyborg side played an outstanding role in the October uprising. Owing to the extraordinary bravery of these men, the role of the Petrograd garrison was reduced largely to lending moral and, at times, military support to the front-rank fighters.

Pravda, No. 241, November 6, 1918.

THE POLITICAL STATE OF THE REPUBLIC

(Report delivered on October 27, 1920, at the Regional Conference of Communist Organizations of the Don and Caucasus held in the City of Vladikavkaz)

COMRADES! Prior to the October Revolution, the conviction was prevalent in some socialist circles of Western Europe that a socialist revolution could run its course and be crowned with success sooner than elsewhere in countries where capitalism was developed, some conjecturing that that country would be England, others—Belgium, etc. But nearly all of them said that the socialist revolution could not commence in a country backward in point of capitalist development, in which the proletariat was little organized, as, *e.g.*, in Russia.

The October Revolution has disproved this view, for the socialist revolution began precisely in a country backward in point of capitalist development, *i.e.*, in Russia. Furthermore, some of the participants in the October Revolution were convinced that the socialist revolution in Russia could be crowned with success and that this success could endure only in case the revolution in Russia was immediately followed by a more profound and more serious revolutionary explosion in the West, which would support the revolution in Russia and impel it onward, and it was assumed that such an explosion was bound to start.

This view has also been disproved by events, for Socialist Russia has been successfully continuing to exist and develop for three years now without having received any direct support from the Western proletariat, surrounded as it is by hostile states. It turned out that not only is it possible for a socialist revolution to begin in a backward country, but also for it to be crowned with success, to progress, to serve as a prototype for countries with developed capitalism.

Thus the question of the present state of Russia, placed on the agenda by the conference, assumes the following aspect: Can Russia, left more or less to itself, representing a kind of oasis of socialism surrounded by hostile capitalist states—can that Russia hold out in the future, smiting and annihilating its enemies the same as it has done hitherto?

In order to solve this question, it is necessary, first of all, to elucidate the conditions which ensure the existence and successes of Soviet Russia and which can ensure them also in the future. These conditions are of two kinds: permanent conditions, not dependent upon us; and variable conditions, that depend upon the human factor. To the former category of conditions we must assign, first, the circumstance that Russia is a boundless, an enormous country, on whose territory it is possible to hold out for a long time by retreating into the hinterland in case of reverses so as to renew the offensive after having gathered strength.

Had Russia been a small country like Hungary, where a strong onslaught by the enemy quickly settles the fate of the country, where it is difficult to manoeuvre, where there is no room for retreat—had Russia been a small country like that, it would scarcely have lasted all this time as a socialist country. Then there is a second condition which is also of a permanent nature and contributes to the development of socialist Russia. It is the circumstance that Russia is one of the few countries in the world whose interior abounds in all kinds of fuel, raw materials and foodstuffs, *i.e.*, a country independent of imports from abroad as regards fuel, food supplies, etc., a country which in this respect can dispense with foreign countries. There is no doubt that had Russia lived on foreign grain and fuel, as Italy for instance, it would have got into a critical position on the morrow of the revolution, for it would have sufficed to subject it to a blockade in order to leave it without bread and fuel. Yet, as it is, the blockade of Russia, undertaken by the Entente, prejudiced the interests not only of Russia, but also of the Entente itself, for the latter was deprived of Russian raw materials.

But apart from permanent conditions, there are also variable conditions, which are as necessary for the existence and develop-

ment of Soviet Russia as the permanent ones. What are these conditions? They are the conditions which secure the reserves of Russia. The fact of the matter is that in view of the bitter warfare between Russia and the Entente, warfare which has been lasting for three years and may go on for another three years, the question of combatant reserves is of decisive importance. What are the reserves of the Entente? What are our reserves?

The reserves of the Entente are, above all, Wrangel and the young armies of the young bourgeois states, which so far have not been contaminated with the "poison of class contradictions" (Poland, Roumania, Armenia, Georgia, etc.). The weak point of the Entente in this respect is that it does not possess a counter-revolutionary army of its own. Owing to the revolutionary movement in the West, it is unable to move its own, *i.e.*, English, French and other troops, against Russia, and is therefore forced to use foreign armies, which are financed by it, but of which armies it cannot dispose entirely at its own discretion, as if they were its own armies. The fact that these armies act in accordance with the directions of the Entente does not in any way deny the presence of those points of friction which do exist and will exist between the Entente and the national interests of the states whose armies the Entente is using. The treaty of peace with Poland, signed in spite of the whisperings of the Entente, confirmed once more the presence of such points of friction. And this circumstance cannot but undermine the inner force of the effective reserves of the Entente.

The reserves of the Entente consist, secondly, in the counter-revolutionary forces which are operating in the rear of our armies, organizing all kinds of guerilla warfare and other actions.

Finally, the Entente possesses yet other reserves which operate in the colonies and semi-colonies that have been enslaved by the Entente, in order to nip in the bud the revolutionary movement in these countries.

We shall not speak of the reserves of the Entente in Europe itself, which take the form of diverse rattlesnakes, including the second International, which pursue the aim of stifling the socialist revolution in the West.

The reserves of Russia are, first of all, the Red Army, an army consisting of workers and peasants. The Red Army differs from the armies hired or bribed by the Entente, in that it fights for the freedom and independence of its own country, in that its interests merge in the interests of the country for which it sheds its blood and with the interests of the government under whose directions it fights. Herein lies the inexhaustible inner force of the main reserves of Soviet Russia.

The reserves of Russia consist, secondly, in those revolutionary movements in the West which on developing pass into a socialist revolution. There is no doubt that without this revolutionary movement in the West, the Entente would have had its own troops and would have decided to risk direct military intervention in the affairs of Russia.

Finally, the reserves of Russia consist in that growing ferment in the East and in the colonies and semi-colonies of the Entente which, passing into an open revolutionary movement for the liberation of the countries of the East from the yoke of imperialism, threatens to leave the Entente without sources of raw material and fuel. It ought to be borne in mind that the colonies represent the Achilles' heel of imperialism and that a blow dealt it places the Entente in a critical position. Doubtlessly the revolutionary movement in the East creates an atmosphere of uncertainty and disintegration around the Entente. Such are our reserves.

What is the historical development of these factors?

In 1918 Soviet Russia presented an interior Russia cut off from the sources of raw materials, foodstuffs and fuel (the Ukraine, Caucasus, Siberia, Turkestan), without an army, without support from the proletariat of Western Europe. At that time the Entente could talk of direct military intervention in the affairs of Russia, which it in fact did. After two years, Russia presents a totally different picture: Siberia, the Ukraine, the Caucasus with Turkestan are already freed; Yudenich, Kolchak and Denikin have been defeated; some of the young bourgeois states (Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland) have been neutralized; the remnants of the Denikin army (the army of Wrangel) are

on the verge of being routed; the revolutionary movement in the countries of the West is on the upgrade, strengthens its militant organ—the Third International—while the Entente no longer dares even to dream of direct military intervention in the affairs of Russia; the revolutionary movement in the East against the Entente is growing, crystallizing its core personified by revolutionary Turkey and creating its militant organ in the form of the Committee of Action and Propaganda. In brief: the reserves of the Entente are melting away from day to day while the reserves of Soviet Russia are being replenished.

It is obvious that now, in 1920, the chances of defeating Russia are smaller, incomparably smaller than two years ago. It is obvious that if Russia withstood the onslaught of the Entente two years ago, it will be able to withstand it so much the more now that the reserves of Russia are growing in all spheres of struggle.

Does this mean that the war against the Entente is drawing to a close, that we can lay down our arms—disband the army and embark on peaceful work? No, it does not. The Entente, which reluctantly reconciled itself to the fact that peace was signed with the Poles, according to all indications does not propose to lay down its arms. It apparently intends to transfer the scene of military operations to the South, to the Transcaucasian district and in this connection it is highly possible that Georgia, in discharge of its duties as a kept mistress of the Entente, will not refuse to render a service to the latter. The Entente obviously regards the world as too small to hold both it and Russia; one of the parties must go under in order that peace on earth may be established. If matters stand thus, if such is the way the question is posed by the Entente—and it is only in this way that it is posed by it—it is clear that Russia cannot lay down its arms. On the contrary, we must exert every effort to set all forces of the country in motion to be able to repel a new blow. The strengthening and consolidation of the Red Army, the defender of the freedom and independence of our country, utmost support of the socialist revolution in the West, support with all our forces and all our resources of the countries of the East fighting against

the Entente for their liberation—such are our most urgent obligations which we must discharge unfalteringly, with the utmost energy, if we want to win. And we shall undoubtedly win, if we honestly discharge these obligations.

In concluding my speech, I should like to mention one condition the absence of which would extremely hamper the victory of the revolution in the West. I refer to the creation of a food reserve for the revolutions in the West. The fact is that the Western states (Germany, Italy and other states) are completely dependent on America, which supplies Europe with grain; a victory of the revolution in these countries would confront the proletariat with a food crisis on the first day after the revolution, if bourgeois America were to refuse to supply them with grain, which is quite likely. Russia does not possess any special food reserves but it could none the less scrape together some supplies and in view of the possibility and probability of the food prospects outlined we ought immediately to raise the question of forming a food reserve in Russia for our Western comrades. Some comrades do not pay due attention to this question, yet, as you see, it may be of the utmost, vital importance for the course and issue of the revolution in the West.

The Regional Conference of Communist Organizations of the Don and the Caucasus. Rostov-on-Don, 1921.

THREE YEARS OF PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

(Report at the Celebration Meeting of the Baku Soviet, November 7, 1920)

THE fundamental question in the life of Russia during the three years' activity of the Soviet government is undoubtedly the question of the international position of Russia. Time was when Soviet Russia was ignored, when no account was taken of it, when it went unrecognized. This was the first period—from the day Soviet rule was established in Russia until German imperialism was routed. During that period the imperialists of the West, both coalitions—the British and the German—were at death grips with each other and took no notice of Soviet Russia. They were too busy, so to speak, to bother about it.

The second period—the period from the time German imperialism was routed and the German revolution commenced, down to the time of Denikin's wide offensive against Russia, when he stood at the gates of Tula. This period, from the point of view of the international position of Russia, is distinguished by the fact that the Entente—the Anglo-Franco-American coalition—after routing Germany marshalled all its available forces against Soviet Russia. That is the period when we were threatened by an alliance of fourteen states, an alliance which subsequently proved to be mythical.

The third period is the one we are going through at the present time, when we are not only taken notice of as a socialist power, are not only recognized *de facto*, but are also feared somewhat.

THE FIRST PERIOD

Three years ago, on October 25 (or November 7, new style), 1917, a small band of Bolsheviks, the active members of the

Petrograd Soviet, gathered together and decided to surround Kerensky's palace, capture his troops which had already been demoralized, and hand over power to the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers,' Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was then gathering.

At that time many people regarded us as cranks at best, and as "agents of German imperialism" at worst.

From the point of view of the international situation, this period could be described as the period of Soviet Russia's complete isolation.

Not only did the surrounding bourgeois states adopt a hostile attitude towards Russia, but even our socialist "comrades" in the West eyed us with distrust.

If Soviet Russia none the less was preserved as a state, this was due only to the fact that the imperialists of the West were engaged in a serious struggle among themselves. Moreover, they treated the experiment of the Bolsheviks with irony; they calculated that the Bolsheviks would die a natural death.

From the point of view of the internal situation, this period can be characterized as the period of the destruction of the old world in Russia, as the period of the destruction of the whole machinery of the old bourgeois rule.

We knew from theory that the proletariat could not simply take the old state machinery and set it in motion. This theoretical acquisition of ours, supplied by Marx, was wholly borne out by the facts when we met with a long stretch of sabotage on the part of officials, office employees and the upper strata of the proletariat, a stretch of utter disorganization of state power.

The first and most important apparatus of the bourgeois state —the old army and its generals—was scrapped. This cost us dearly. As a result of this scrapping we were compelled temporarily to remain without any army whatever and to sign the Brest Peace Treaty. However, there was no other way out, history afforded us no alternative for freeing the proletariat.

Furthermore, another bourgeois apparatus—officialdom—equally important in the hands of the bourgeoisie, was demolished and scrapped.

In the domain of the economic management of the country, the most characteristic feature was the taking of the banks, the principal nerve centres of the economic life of the bourgeoisie, out of the hands of the bourgeoisie. The banks were taken out of the hands of the bourgeoisie and the latter was left without a soul, as it were. Thereafter followed the scrapping of the old apparatus of economic life and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie; its factories and mills were taken away from it and were transferred into the hands of the working class; finally, there was the scrapping of the old food supply apparatus and an attempt to build up a new apparatus capable of collecting grain and distributing it among the population. In conclusion—the liquidation of the Constituent Assembly. These were about all the measures which Soviet Russia was forced to put into effect during this period in order to demolish the old machinery of the capitalist world.

The Second Period

The second period dates from the time when the Anglo-Franco-American coalition, after defeating German imperialism, set out to settle accounts with Soviet Russia.

From the international standpoint, this period is characterized as a period of open warfare between the forces of the Entente and the forces of Soviet Russia. If during the first period we were ignored and were the objects of ridicule and scorn, during this period, on the contrary, all the black forces of reaction sounded the alarm to put an end to the so-called "anarchy" in Russia, which threatened to disintegrate the whole capitalist world.

From the point of view of internal relations, this period must be characterized as a period of construction, as a period when the destruction of the old machinery of the bourgeois state had in the main been completed, and when a new epoch of construction set in, when the factories and mills taken away from the owners were set going again, when real workers' control was inaugurated, after which the proletariat passed from control to

direct management, when a new apparatus was being constructed in place of the food supply apparatus that had been demolished, when new bodies were instituted in the centre and in the provinces in place of the destroyed railway apparatus, a new army in place of the old.

It must be admitted that construction during that period proceeded in general at a halting pace, because the main constructive energy, nine-tenths of it, was expended on the creation of the Red Army, for in the life-and-death struggle against the forces of the Entente the very existence of Soviet Russia was at stake, and at that period it was possible to defend that existence only by the forces of a powerful Red Army. And it must be stated that our efforts were not in vain because the Red Army which defeated Yudenich and Kolchak displayed its full power even at that early period.

From the point of view of the international position of Russia, this second period can be called the period of the gradual disappearance of the seclusion, the isolation of Russia. The first allies of Russia appear on the scene. The German revolution brings to the fore a solid body of workers, a Communist cadre which lays the foundation of the new Communist Party represented by the Liebknecht group.

In France a small group hitherto unnoticed, the Loriot group, becomes an important group of the Communist movement. In Italy the Communist tendency, weak at first, captures almost the entire Italian Socialist Party, its majority.

Ferment begins in the East in connection with the successes of the Red Army; in Turkey, *e.g.*, this ferment passes into outright war against the Entente and its allies. In that period the bourgeois states themselves do no longer represent the compact mass inimical to Russia that they represented during the first period, not to mention the dissensions within the Entente itself over the question of recognizing Soviet Russia, dissensions which increase with the lapse of time; voices begin to be heard about negotiations with Russia, about coming to an agreement with it —*e.g.*, Esthonia, Latvia and Finland.

Finally, the slogan "Hands off Russia," which has become

popular among the British and French workers, renders impossible direct armed intervention by the Entente in the affairs of Russia. The Entente is forced to abandon the idea of sending British and French soldiers against Russia; the Entente is forced to confine itself to the use of armies of other nations against Russia of which, however, it cannot dispose at its discretion.

The Third Period

The third period is the one we are going through now. This period may be called a period of transition. The first half of this period is distinguished by the fact that Russia, after defeating its principal enemy—Denikin—and foreseeing the end of war. set itself the task of switching the state apparatus, which had been adapted to war purposes, on to a new track, the track of economic construction. Whereas formerly it was said: "everything for war," "everything for the Red Army," "everything for victory over the external enemy," now it began to be said: "everything for the consolidation of our economic life." Nevertheless, this section of the third period, which began after Denikin was routed and driven from the Ukraine, was interrupted by the incursion of Poland. The Entente here pursued the aim of hindering Russia from becoming economically strong and from becoming one of the strongest powers in the world. The Entente was afraid of this and it incited Poland against Russia.

It became necessary to reconstruct anew the state apparatus which had already been adapted to economic construction, it became necessary once more to reconstruct the labour armies formed in the Ukraine, the Urals and the Don along military lines, in order to rally the effective troops round them and then dispatch them against Poland. This period comes to a close with the neutralization of Poland and for the time being no new foreign foes are in sight. The only direct enemy is the remnant of Denikin's army represented by Wrangel, whom our dear Comrade Budenny is now putting to rout.

Now there is reason to suppose that, for a short while at any rate, Soviet Russia will obtain a considerable respite in order to

direct all the energy of its indefatigable workers—who raised the Red Army out of the ground, as it were, in almost a single day—along the path of economic construction, to put the factories, agriculture and the food supply agencies on their feet.

From the point of view of foreign, international relations, the third period is characterized by the fact that not only did they cease to ignore Russia and begin to fight against it, doing everything in their power to produce upon the scene even the mythical fourteen states, with which Churchill threatened Russia, but after having suffered defeat several times they began to be somewhat afraid of Russia, feeling that Russia personified a mighty, growing, socialist, people's power which would not permit itself to be insulted.

From the point of view of domestic relations, of internal construction, this period is marked by the fact that Russia now has its hands free after the defeat of Wrangel, and applies all its strength to internal construction; and it is already noticeable that our economic bodies work far better and much more efficiently than during the second period. In the summer of 1918 the Moscow workers received one-eighth of a pound of bread mixed with oil cake once every two days. This sad and difficult period is now over. The workers of Moscow as well as of Petrograd now obtain one and a half pounds of bread. That means that our food supply organs have been put in order, have improved, have learned how to collect grain.

As regards our policy toward the domestic enemies, it must and will stay the same as it was throughout all three of these periods, *i.e.*, a policy of suppressing all opponents of the proletariat. This, of course, is not a policy of "universal freedom"—during the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat there can be no policy of universal freedom in our country, *i.e.*, no freedom of speech, of press, etc., for the bourgeoisie. Our domestic policy reduces itself to granting a maximum of freedom to the proletarian strata in town and country, in denying even a minimum of freedom to the remnants of the bourgeois class. This constitutes the crux of our policy, based on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Perspectives

Our work of construction during these three years has, of course, not been as successful as we would have liked to see it, but it is necessary to take into consideration those difficult, impossible conditions of work, which we could not shake off and with which it was impossible to quarrel, but which it was necessary to overcome.

In the first place, we had to build under fire. Imagine a stone mason who while building with one hand defends the house he is building with the other.

Second, we were building not bourgeois economy, where everyone pursues his own private interests and does not worry about the state as a whole, pays no heed to the question of planned, organized economy on a national scale. No, we were building socialist society. This means that the needs of society as a whole have to be taken into consideration, that economy has to be organized on an all-Russian scale in a planned, conscious manner. No doubt this task is incomparably more complicated and more difficult.

That is why our work of construction could not yield maximum results. Our perspectives under such a state of affairs are clear: we are on the verge of liquidating our foreign enemies, our entire state apparatus is about to be switched from the military track to the economic track; we stand for peace in our foreign policy, we are not partisans of war. But if war is forced upon us, and there are some indications of an attempt by the Entente to transfer the theatre of military operations to the South, to Transcaucasia—if this Entente, which has been beaten several times by us, will once more force war on us, it is quite obvious that we shall not let our arms out of our hands, that we shall not disband our troops; as before, we shall exert all our efforts to the end that the Red Army may thrive and be in good fighting trim, that it may be able to defend Soviet Russia from its enemies as boldly and bravely as it has done hitherto.

In surveying the past of the Soviet government, one involuntarily recalls the evening of October 24, 1917, three years ago,

when we, a small group of Bolsheviks headed by Comrade Lenin, with the Petrograd Soviet (it was Bolshevik at that time) and the exiguous Red Guard in our possession, having just a small, not yet well-cemented Communist Party of 150,000 members, no more, at our command—how we, this small group, after removing the representatives of the bourgeoisie from their seats of government, transferred the state power to the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers,' Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Three years have passed since.

During this period Russia, after going through fire and brimstone, was forged into a very great, a socialist world power.

While in those days we only held the Petrograd Soviet in our hands, now, three years later, all the Soviets of Russia have rallied to us.

Instead of a Constituent Assembly, for which our opponents prepared, we now have the All-Russian Central Executive Committee which has grown out of the Petrograd Soviet.

While in those days we possessed a small guard consisting of Petrograd workers, who were able to settle accounts with the *Junkers* that had rebelled in Petrograd but were not able to fight against the external enemy, because they were weak, we now have a glorious army of many millions, which smites the enemies of Soviet Russia, which has defeated Kolchak and Denikin, and is now smashing the last remnants of Wrangel's army under the generalship of Comrade Budenny, the tried leader of our cavalry.

While in those days, three years ago, we possessed but a small, not yet fully cemented party of Communists—some 150,000 members all told—now, three years later, after the fire and brimstone through which Soviet Russia has passed, we have a party of 700,000; a party forged of steel; a party whose members can at any time be re-aligned and concentrated in hundreds of thousands on any Party work; a party which does not fear any confusion within its ranks, which at a mere nod of the Central Committee can reform its ranks and advance against the enemy.

While then, three years ago, we had only small groups in the West in sympathy with us—the Loriot group in France, the Maclean group in England and the group of Liebknecht, who was

murdered by the scoundrels of capitalism in Germany—now, three years later, the greatest organization of the international revolutionary movement has grown up before our eyes—the Third Communist International, which has won over the principal parties in Europe: the German, the French and the Italian. Today we possess the basic core of the international socialist movement, represented by the Communist International, which has defeated the Second International and put it flat on its back.

Nor is it a mere accident that Mr. Kautsky, the leader of the Second International, has been cast out of Germany by the revolution, that he is forced to seek refuge in backward Tiflis among the Georgian social-innkeepers.

Finally, while three years ago in the countries of the oppressed East we encountered mere indifference to the revolution, today the East has begun to stir and we are witness now to a whole series of liberation movements in the East, directed against the Entente, against imperialism. We possess a revolutionary core which rallies to itself all the other colonies and semi-colonies represented by the government of Kemal, which, though bourgeois-revolutionary, none the less fights the Entente arms in hand.

While three years ago we did not even dare to dream of a stir in the East, we now not only have a revolutionary core of the East, represented by a bourgeois-revolutionary Turkey, but likewise possess a socialist organ of the East—the *Committee of Action and Propaganda.*

All these facts, which proclaim our poverty in the revolutionary sense three years ago and our wealth since, all these facts serve as the basis for our assertion that Soviet Russia will live, that it will develop and will conquer its enemies.

Doubtlessly our path is not easy, but there is also no doubt that our difficulties do not daunt us. Paraphrasing the famous words of Luther, Russia might say: "Here I stand on the borderline between the old, capitalist world and the new, socialist world; here at this borderline I combine the efforts of the proletarians of the West with those of the peasantry of the East, in order to demolish the old world. May the god of history help me!"

Kommunist, Baku, No. 160, November 11, 1920.

THE PARTY AFTER THE SEIZURE OF POWER

(Extract from the article: THE PARTY BEFORE AND AFTER THE SEIZURE OF POWER)

THE seizure of power by the proletariat in Russia created an altogether peculiar situation both in regard to international relations and in regard to the internal state of Russia, a situation which the world had never witnessed before.

To begin with, the October Revolution of 1917 denotes a breach in the world's social front and creates a turn in the whole of world history. Imagine a vast social front from the backward colonies to progressive America and then a powerful break in this front by the Russian detachment of the international proletariat, a breach which menaces the existence of imperialism, which has mixed up all the cards and thwarted all the plans of the sharks of imperialism, which has facilitated, radically facilitated, the struggle of the international proletariat against capitalism—such is the historic significance of October 1917. From that moment our Party was transformed from a *national* force into a predominantly *international* force, and the Russian proletariat from a backward detachment of the international proletariat into its *vanguard.* The tasks of the international proletariat are henceforth reduced to widening the Russian breach, to assisting the vanguard that has moved ahead, to preventing the enemies from surrounding this bold vanguard and cutting it off from the base. The tasks of international imperialism on the contrary are reduced to liquidating the Russian breach, to liquidating it at all costs. That is why our Party, if it wishes to maintain power, undertakes to achieve the "utmost possible in one (our own) country *for* the development, support and stirring up of the revolution *in all countries.*" (*Cf.* Lenin,

The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, Chap. VII—"What Is Internationalism?") That is why our Party from October 1917 on was transformed from a national into an international force, into a party of revolution on an *international* scale.

A similar radical change occurred in the position of the Party *within the country itself* as a result of October 1917. During the former periods the Party was a lever for the destruction of the old, for the overthrow of capitalism in Russia. Now, in the third period, it has on the contrary been transformed from a party of insurrection within Russia into a party of construction, a party creating new forms of economy. Formerly it recruited the best forces of the workers for an assault on the old order of society, now it enlists them to set going the food supply system, transport, the key industries. Formerly it attracted the revolutionary elements of the peasantry to overthrow the landlords; now it enrols them to improve agriculture, to consolidate the alliance between the toiling elements of the peasantry and the proletariat in power. Formerly it enlisted the best elements of belated nationalities to fight capital; now it enlists them to build up the life of the toiling elements of these nationalities on the basis of co-operation with the proletariat. Formerly it was busy destroying the army, the old army of the generals, now it must create a new army of workers and peasants necessary to defend the conquests of the revolution against foreign foes.

From a party of insurrection within Russia, the Russian Communist Party has been transformed into a party of peaceful construction. It is precisely for this reason that it has eliminated from the arsenal of the proletariat such forms of struggle as strikes or uprisings, which have now become unnecessary in Russia.

Formerly it was possible to do without military and economic experts, for the work of the Party was predominantly that of criticism, and to criticize is easy. . . . Now the Party cannot do without experts; parallel with the utilization of old specialists it must train its own experts: moulders, supply men, operators (on military matters), food specialists, agricultural experts, rail-

way experts, experts on co-operatives, industrial experts, foreign-trade experts (in the field of economy). It is impossible to build without doing this.

A change has taken place in the position of the Party also in the sense that there has been a colossal increase and augmentation in its forces and resources, in its reserves. The reserves of the Party are:

1) the contradictions between the various social groups within Russia;

2) the contradictions and conflicts, sometimes reaching the stage of military clashes, between the surrounding capitalist states;

3) the socialist movement in the capitalist countries and its organ, the Communist International;

4) the national liberation movement in the backward and colonial countries;

5) the peasantry and the Red Army in Russia;

6) the apparatus of diplomacy and of foreign trade;

7) the entire might of state power.

Such are, generally speaking, the forces and possibilities within the scope of which—and this scope is sufficiently wide—Party strategy can manoeuvre and on the basis of which Party tactics are able to conduct the day-to-day work of mobilizing the forces.

All these are favourable features of October 1917.

However, October also has its dark side. The fact of the matter is that the seizure of power by the proletariat occurred under peculiar conditions, domestic and foreign, which placed their imprint on the entire work of the Party after it seized power. In the first place, Russia is economically a backward country; it cannot of its own strength set aright the transport system, develop industry and electrify the urban and rural industries unless it exchanges the raw materials in its possession for the machines and equipment of the Western countries. Second, Russia to this day still represents a socialist island surrounded by capitalist states which are industrially better developed and which are hostile to it. If Soviet Russia had as its neighbour a big, industrially developed Soviet state or several Soviet states, it could

easily have established co-operation with such states on the basis of an exchange of raw material for machines and equipment. However, so long as this is not so, Soviet Russia and our Party, which is controlling its government, are forced to seek forms and means of economic co-operation with hostile capitalist groups of the West in order to acquire the necessary technique pending the victory of the proletarian revolution in one or several industrial capitalist countries. The concessionary form of relations and foreign trade are means to this end. Failing these, there is no use even thinking of serious economic construction, of electrifying the country. This process will undoubtedly be slow and painful, but it is inevitable, unavoidable, and this necessity will not cease to be a necessity by reason of the fact that some impatient comrades are getting nervous and demand quick results and spectacular operations.

From the standpoint of economics, the present conflicts and military clashes between the capitalist groups themselves as well as the struggle of the proletariat against the capitalist class are based on the fundamental conflict between the modern forces of production and the national-imperialist framework of their development, and the capitalist forms of appropriation. The imperialist framework and the capitalist form stifle the productive forces and prevent them from developing. The only way out is the organization of world economy on the principle of fraternal economic co-operation between the progressive (industrial) countries and the backward (fuel and raw-material producing) countries (in place of the principle of robbery of the latter by the former). That is precisely why an international proletarian revolution is needed. Without this there is no use even thinking of the organization and normal development of world economy. However, in order to begin (at least *begin*) instituting a correct world economy, the victory of the proletariat in at least a few advanced countries is necessary. So long as this has not been achieved, our Party must seek circuitous paths of co-operating with capitalist groups in the economic arena.

That is why the Party which has cast off its bourgeoisie and raised the standard of world proletarian revolution considers it

expedient at the same time to "unfetter" small-scale production and small-scale industry, to allow a partial regeneration of capitalism, making it dependent on the state power to attract leaseholders and shareholders, and so on, and so forth, pending the moment when the policy of the Party: to achieve the "utmost possible in one (our own) country *for* the development, support and stirring up of the revolution *in all countries*," will yield tangible results.

Such are the peculiar conditions, favourable and prejudicial, which were created by October 1917, conditions under which our Party is acting and developing during the third period of its existence.

These conditions determine the colossal power now wielded by our Party both within and without Russia. They likewise determine the incredible difficulties and dangers which confront the Party and which it must overcome at all costs.

During this period the tasks of the Party in the domain of *foreign policy* are determined by the position of our Party as a party of international revolution. These tasks are:

1) to utilize each and every contradiction and conflict among the surrounding capitalist groups and governments for the purpose of disintegrating imperialism;

2) to spare no pains or means to render assistance to the proletarian revolution in the West;

3) to take all necessary measures to strengthen the national-liberation movement in the East;

4) to strengthen the Red Army.

During this period the tasks of the Party in the domain of *domestic policy* are determined by the position of our Party *within* Russia, as a party of *peaceful* constructive work. These tasks are:

1) to consolidate the alliance between the proletariat and the toiling peasantry by: a) attracting the most efficient elements from among the peasants, those possessing the greatest initiative, to the work of building up the state; b) assisting peasant economy with agricultural instruction, repair of machines, etc.; c)

developing the proper exchange of products between town and country; d) gradually electrifying agriculture.

(One important circumstance ought to be borne in mind. It is a fortunate peculiarity of our revolution and an enormous advantage for our Party, distinguishing our revolution and Party from the revolutions and proletarian parties of the West, that the broadest and most powerful strata of the petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry, were transformed from potential reserves of the bourgeoisie into real reserves of the proletariat. This circumstance determined the weakness of the Russian bourgeoisie and worked to the advantage of the Russian proletariat. This is mainly explained by the fact that the liberation of the peasants from landlord bondage proceeded in Russia, unlike in the West, under the leadership of the proletariat. It is on this basis that the alliance between the proletariat and the toiling peasantry was formed in Russia. It is the duty of the Communists to value this alliance and to strengthen it.)

2) to develop industry by: a) concentrating a maximum of forces on mastering the key industries and on improving the supply of the workers engaged therein; b) developing foreign trade by importing machines and equipment; c) attracting shareholders and leaseholders; d) creating at least a minimum of food reserves for manoeuvring purposes; d) electrifying transport and large-scale industries.

Such, in general, are the tasks of the Party in the present period of its development.

Pravda, No. 190, August 28, 1921.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS

THE strength of the October Revolution lies among other things in the fact that unlike the revolutions of the West it rallied to the Russian proletariat the many millions of the petty bourgeoisie and above all its most powerful and most numerous strata—the peasantry. The Russian bourgeoisie was thus isolated, shorn of its army, and the Russian proletariat was transformed into the arbiter of the destinies of the country. But for this the Russian workers would not have maintained themselves in power.

Peace, the agrarian revolution and freedom for the nationalities—these were the three principal factors which also rallied the peasants of more than twenty nationalities of vast Russia around the Red Flag of the Russian proletariat.

There is no need to speak here of the first two factors; enough has been written about them in literature and, besides, they speak for themselves. As regards the third factor—the national policy of the Russian Communists—its importance has apparently not yet been fully perceived. It would not be amiss therefore to say a few words about it.

To begin with, of the one hundred and forty million constituting the population of the R.S.F.S.R. (exclusive of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland) the Great Russians do not comprise more than seventy-five million. The remaining sixty-five million consist of nationalities other than Great Russians.

Furthermore, these nationalities inhabit mainly the borderland districts, localities which are most vulnerable from the military point of view, and these borderland districts abound in raw materials, fuel and foodstuffs.

Finally, these borderlands are less developed (or not devel-

oped at all) in respect of industries and military matters than Central Russia, owing to which they are unable to defend their independent existence without the military and economic assistance of Central Russia, just as Central Russia is unable to preserve its military and economic power without fuel, raw material and foodstuff aid from the borderlands.

These circumstances coupled with certain provisions in the national program of the Communist Party determined the character of the national policy of the Russian Communists.

The essence of this policy can be expressed in a few words: renunciation of each and every "claim" or "right" to regions inhabited by non-Russian nationalities; recognition (not in words but in deeds) of the right of these nationalities to exist as independent states; voluntary military and economic union of these nationalities with Central Russia; assistance to backward nationalities in their cultural and economic development, without which the so-called "equal national status" becomes an empty phrase; all this on the basis of complete emancipation of the peasants and the concentration of all power in the hands of the labouring elements of the borderland nationalities—such is the national policy of the Russian Communists.

There is no need to mention that the Russian workers on coming into power would not have won the sympathy and confidence of their fellow-workers belonging to other nationalities and above all to the oppressed masses of nationalities deprived of equal rights, had they not proved in fact their readiness to carry such a national policy into effect, had they not renounced "their rights" to Finland, had they not evacuated their troops from Northern Persia, had they not quashed the claims of the Russian imperialists to certain districts of Mongolia and China, had they not assisted the backward nationalities of the former Russian Empire to develop their culture and statehood in their native tongue.

Only on the basis of this confidence could there arise that indestructible union of the peoples of the R.S.F.S.R., against which all "diplomatic" machinations and carefully executed "blockades" proved powerless.

More than that. The Russian workers could not have defeated Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel without enjoying this sympathy and confidence of the oppressed masses of the borderlands of former Russia. It ought not to be forgotten that the field of operations of these mutinous generals was confined to the borderlands inhabited mainly by non-Russian nationalities, and the latter could not but hate Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel for their imperialist and Russification policy. The Entente which interfered in this matter and supported these generals could only find support in the Russifying elements of the borderlands. It thereby managed only to inflame the hatred felt by the population of the borderlands for the mutinous generals and increased its sympathy with the Soviet government.

This circumstance determined the intrinsic weakness of the rear of Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel, therefore also the weakness of their fronts, *i.e.*, in the final analysis determined their defeat.

However, the beneficial results of the national policy of the Russian Communists are not confined to the territory of the R.S.F.S.R. and the Soviet republics connected with it. They also affect, though indirectly, the attitude of the neighbouring countries towards the R.S.F.S.R. The radical improvement in the attitude of Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, India and other Eastern countries towards Russia, which was formerly regarded as a bogey by these countries, is in itself a *fact* which even so valiant a politician as Lord Curzon does not venture to dispute. No proof need be adduced to show that if the above-outlined national policy had not been systematically carried out within the R.S.F.S.R. throughout the four years during which Soviet rule has existed, the said radical change in the attitude of the neighbouring countries towards Russia would have been inconceivable.

Such, in the main, are the results of the national policy of the Communists. Just now, on the fourth anniversary of Soviet rule, when the arduous war is over, when construction has been started on an extensive scale, and when one involuntarily looks back on the path traversed to encompass it at a single glance, these results have become particularly obvious.

Pravda, No. 251, November 6-7, 1921.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND THE PEASANTS

(*Extract from the article entitled:* PERSPECTIVES)

THERE is a theory current in the West, by virtue of which the workers can assume and retain power only in a country where they constitute a majority or where at all events those engaged in industry constitute a majority of the population. It is really on this ground that the Messrs. Kautsky reject the "regularity" of the proletarian revolution in Russia, where the proletariat forms a minority. This theory tacitly assumes that the petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry, cannot support the struggle of the workers for power, that the bulk of the peasantry constitutes a reserve of the bourgeoisie and not of the proletariat. The historical basis of this assumption consists in this: that in the West (France, Germany) the petty bourgeoisie (the peasantry) at critical moments were *usually found* on the side of the bourgeoisie (1848 and 1871 in France, the attempts at a proletarian revolution in Germany after 1918). The causes of this phenomenon are:

1) The bourgeois revolution in the West took place under the leadership of the bourgeoisie (the proletariat at that time represented only a tractive force of the revolution), the peasantry there received its land and freedom from feudal bondage at the hands of the bourgeoisie, as it were, wherefore the influence of the bourgeoisie over the peasantry was even then regarded as secure.

2) More than half a century elapsed between the beginning of the bourgeois revolution in the West and the first attempts at a proletarian revolution. In the course of this period the peasantry was able to produce a powerful rural bourgeoisie, which enjoyed influence in the countryside and which served as a connecting link between the peasantry and the big capitalists of the city,

clinching thereby the hegemony of the bourgeoisie over the peasantry.

In this historical setting the above theory originated.

In Russia a totally different picture is revealed.

In the first place, the bourgeois revolution in Russia (February-March 1917), in contradistinction to the West, took place under the leadership of the proletariat in bitter combat with the bourgeoisie, in the course of which the peasantry rallied around the proletariat, its leader.

Second, the (successful) attempt at a proletarian revolution in Russia (October 1917), also in contradistinction to the West, did not begin half a century after the bourgeois revolution, but followed upon the heels of the latter, some six or eight months afterwards, during which period the peasantry could not, of course, produce a powerful and organized rural bourgeoisie while the big bourgeoisie, which had been overthrown in October 1917, could not subsequently recover.

This last-named circumstance consolidated the alliance between the workers and peasants still further.

That is why the Russian workers, constituting a minority of the population of Russia, became none the less masters of the country, won the sympathy and support of an enormous majority of the population, above all of the peasantry, seized and retained power, whereas the bourgeoisie found itself isolated and without the peasant reserves, all theories notwithstanding.

Hence it follows that:

1) The theory outlined above concerning the "indispensable majority" of the proletarian composition of the population is found wanting, is incorrect from the point of view of Russian realities, or at any rate is interpreted by the Messrs. Kautsky in too simplified and vulgarized a manner.

2) The virtual alliance between the proletariat and the toiling peasantry, which was formed in the course of the revolution, constitutes under the given historical conditions the *basis* of Soviet rule in Russia.

3) It is the duty of the Communists to preserve and consolidate this tacit alliance.

Pravda, No. 286, December 18, 1921.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE STRATEGY OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS

(Extract from the article entitled: ON THE QUESTION OF THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS)

I. Historical Turns—Strategic Plans

The strategy of the Party is not something permanent, fixed once for all time. It changes to meet historical turns, historical shifts. These changes find expression in the fact that for every distinct historical turn, a distinct strategic plan corresponding to it, and in effect throughout the entire period from one turn to another, is elaborated. A strategic plan holds within itself the determination of the direction of the main blow of the revolutionary forces and the scheme of distribution of the million-headed masses on the social front. Naturally the strategic plan suitable for one historical period, possessing its peculiarities, cannot suit another historical period, possessing totally different peculiarities. Every historical turn has its strategic plan which corresponds to its requirements and is adapted to its tasks.

The same can be said in regard to military matters. The strategic plan worked out for warring against Kolchak could not be suitable for the war against Denikin, which required a new strategic plan and which in its turn was unsuitable for the war, say, against the Poles in 1920, for both the direction of the main blow and the scheme of distribution of the main effective forces could not but be different in all three of these cases.

Russia's modern history knows three main historical turns, which gave rise to three different strategic plans in the history of our Party. We consider it necessary to describe them briefly, in order to illustrate how the strategic plans of the Party change in general to meet the new historical shifts.

II. The First Historical Turn and the Course Towards a Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution in Russia

This turn began early in the nineteen hundreds during the period of the Russo-Japanese War, when the defeat of the tsarist armies and the grand political strikes of the Russian workers stirred all the classes of the population and thrust them into the arena of political struggle. This turn ended in the days of the February Revolution of 1917.

Two strategic plans were at grips within our Party during this period: the plan of the Mensheviks (Plekhanov-Martov, 1905) and the plan of the Bolsheviks (Comrade Lenin, 1905).

The Menshevik strategy planned to deliver the main blow at tsarism along the line of a coalition between the liberal bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Taking the stand that the revolution was then regarded as bourgeois, this plan assigned the role of hegemon (leader) of the movement to the liberal bourgeoisie and condemned the proletariat to the role of "the extreme Left opposition," to the role of "impellers" of the bourgeoisie, while the peasantry as one of the fundamental revolutionary forces was barred or almost barred from their scope of vision. It is not difficult to understand that in so far as this plan kept the many millions of peasants in a country like Russia out of the game, it was hopelessly utopian; and in so far as it placed the fate of the revolution into the hands of the liberal bourgeoisie (the hegemony of the bourgeoisie), it was reactionary, for the liberal bourgeoisie had no interest in the full victory of the revolution and was ever ready to settle the matter by striking a bargain with tsarism.

The Bolshevik strategy (see *Two Tactics* by Comrade Lenin) planned to deliver the main blow of the revolution at tsarism along the line of a coalition of the proletariat with the peasantry, while neutralizing the liberal bourgeoisie. Taking the stand that the liberal bourgeosie has no interest in a full victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, that it prefers a bargain with tsarism at the expense of the workers and peasants to a victory of the revolution, this plan assigned to the proletariat, as

the only class in Russia revolutionary to the end, the role of hegemon of the revolutionary movement. This plan is remarkable not only because it correctly took stock of the driving forces of the revolution, but also because it contained within itself in embryo the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat (the hegemony of the proletariat), because it brilliantly foresaw the next, the higher phase of the revolution in Russia, and facilitated the transition to it.

The subsequent development of the revolution, up to and including February 1917, wholly bore out the correctness of this strategic plan.

III. The Second Historical Turn and the Course Towards the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia

The second turn began with the February Revolution of 1917, after the overthrow of tsarism, when the imperialist war revealed the mortal wounds of capitalism throughout the world; when the liberal bourgeoisie, incapable of taking the actual administration of the country into its hands, was forced to confine itself to reserving formal power to itself (the Provisional Government); when the Soviets of the Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who had secured the actual power, had neither experience nor the will to make the necessary use of it; when the soldiers at the front and the workers and peasants in the rear were groaning under the burden of war and economic ruin; when the regime of the "diarchy" and the "liaison commission," rent asunder by internal contradictions and unfit either to wage war or make peace, not only failed to find a "way out of the impasse," but complicated the situation still further. This period ended with the October Revolution in 1917.

Two strategic plans were at grips within the Soviets during that period: the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary plan and the Bolshevik plan.

The Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary strategy, which at first floundered between the Soviets and the Provisional Government, between revolution and counter-revolution, took final shape at the

time the Democratic Conference opened (August 1917). Its structure followed the line of a gradual but persistent elimination of the Soviets from power and the concentration of all power in the country in the hands of the "Pre-Parliament," the prototype of a future bourgeois parliament. The questions of peace and war, the agrarian and labour questions as well as the national question were put off until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, which in its turn was indefinitely postponed. "All power to the Contituent Assembly"—thus the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks formulated their strategic plan. It was a plan preparing the bourgeois dictatorship, trim and spruce true enough, "quite democratic," but none the less a bourgeois dictatorship.

The Bolshevik strategy (see Comrade Lenin's *Theses*, published in April 1917) planned to deliver the main blow along the line of abolishing the power of the bourgeoisie by the combined forces of the proletariat and the poor peasants, along the line of organizing the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a Republic of Soviets. A break with imperialism and withdrawal from the war, liberation of the oppressed nationalities of the former Russian Empire, expropriation of landlords and capitalists, preparation of the conditions for the organization of socialist economy—such were the elements of the strategic plan of the Bolsheviks during this period. "All Power to the Soviets," was the way the Bolsheviks formulated their strategic plan at that time. It is important not only in that it correctly took stock of the driving forces of the new, the proletarian revolution in Russia, but also in that it facilitated and accelerated the unleashing of the revolutionary movement in the West.

Subsequent developments right up to and including the October Revolution fully bore out the correctness of this strategic plan.

IV. The Third Historical Turn and the Course Towards the Proletarian Revolution in Europe

The third turn began with the October Revolution, when the death struggle between the two imperialist groups of the West

reached its climax; when the revolutionary crisis in the West was obviously on the increase; when the bankrupt bourgeois government of Russia, enmeshed in contradictions, fell under the blows of the proletarian revolution; when the victorious proletarian revolution, having broken with imperialism and withdrawn from the war, acquired sworn enemies in the shape of imperialist coalitions in the West; when the decrees of the new, the Soviet government concerning peace, the confiscation of the landlord estates, the expropriation of the capitalists and the liberation of the oppressed nationalities gained for it the confidence of millions of toilers the world over. This was a turn on an international scale, for the international front of capital was broken for the first time, and for the first time the question of the overthrow of capitalism was made a practical issue. The October Revolution was thereby transformed from a national, Russian force, into an international force, and the Russian workers from a backward detachment of the international proletariat into its vanguard which by its self-sacrificing struggle was awakening the workers of the West and the oppressed countries of the East. This turn has not yet reached its ultimate development, for it has not yet developed on an international scale, but its content and general trend have already been fixed with sufficient clarity.

Two strategic plans were at grips at that time in the political circles of Russia: the plan of the counter-revolutionaries who had drawn into their organizations the active section of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the plan of the Bolsheviks.

The counter-revolutionaries and the active Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks planned along the line of concentrating all the discontented elements in a single camp: the old officers in the rear and at the front, the bourgeois-nationalist governments in the borderlands, the capitalists and landlords who had been expropriated by the revolution, the agents of the Entente who were preparing intervention, and others. They were steering towards the overthrow of the Soviet government by means of uprisings or foreign intervention and towards the restoration of the capitalist regime in Russia.

The Bolsheviks, on the contrary, planned along the line of internal consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and the extension of the sphere of action of the proletarian revolution to all the countries of the world, by means of combining the efforts of the Russian proletariat with the efforts of the European proletariat and the oppressed countries of the East against world imperialism. The concise formulation of this strategic plan stated by Comrade Lenin in his pamphlet *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Chap. VII—"What Is Internationalism?" is remarkable:

To achieve the "utmost possible in one (our own) country *for* the development, support and stirring up of the revolution *in all countries.*"

The value of this strategic plan consists not only in that it correctly took stock of the driving forces of the world revolution, but also in that it foresaw and facilitated the process, which later set in, of transforming Soviet Russia into the focal centre of the revolutionary movement of the whole world, into a standard-bearer of the liberation of the workers of the West and the colonies of the East.

The subsequent development of the revolution all over the world as well as the five years of existence of the Soviet government in Russia fully bore out the correctness of this strategic plan. Facts such as that the counter-revolutionaries and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who on several occasions tried to overthrow the Soviet government, are now *émigrés* abroad while the Soviet government and the Comintern are becoming highly important implements of the policy of the world proletariat obviously speak in favour of the strategic plan of the Bolsheviks.

Pravda, No. 56, March 14, 1923.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE QUESTION OF THE MIDDLE STRATA

THE question of the middle strata undoubtedly presents one of the fundamental questions of the workers' revolution. The middle strata are the peasantry and the petty labouring populace of the cities. In this category must also be classified the oppressed nationalities, which consist nine-tenths of middle strata. As you see, these are precisely the strata which, by their economic position, are situated between the proletariat and the capitalist class. The relative importance of these strata is determined by two circumstances: in the first place, these strata represent the majority, or, at any rate, a considerable minority of the population of the existing states; second, they represent the important reserves from among which the capitalist class recruits its army against the proletariat. The proletariat cannot maintain power without the sympathy and support of the middle strata, primarily of the peasantry, especially in a country like our union of republics. The proletariat cannot even seriously think of seizing power unless these strata have at least been neutralized, unless these strata have already had time to divorce themselves from the capitalist class, if they still constitute, in their mass, an army of the capitalists. Hence the struggle for the middle strata, the struggle for the peasantry, which passes like a coloured thread through the whole fabric of our revolution, from 1905 to 1917, a struggle which is far from over and which will go on in the future as well.

The Revolution of 1848 in France suffered defeat because among other things, it failed to evoke sympathetic response among the French peasants. The Paris Commune fell because, among other things, it encountered the opposition of the middle

strata, especially of the peasantry. The same must be said of the Russian Revolution of 1905. Some of the vulgar Marxists, with Kautsky at their head, basing themselves on the experience of the European revolutions, arrived at the conclusion that the middle strata, especially of the peasantry, were well-nigh born enemies of the workers' revolution, and that it was necessary on that account to steer towards a more lengthy period of development, as a result of which the proletariat would become the majority of the nation whereby the actual conditions prerequisite to a victory of the workers' revolution would be created. On the basis of this conclusion, these vulgar Marxists warned the proletariat against a "premature" revolution. On the basis of this conclusion, they, for "considerations of principle" placed these middle strata at the complete disposal of the capitalists. On the basis of this conclusion, they prophesied to us the doom of the Russian October Revolution, referring to the fact that the proletariat constituted a minority in Russia, that Russia was a peasant country and that on that account a victorious workers' revolution was impossible in Russia.

It is characteristic that Marx himself evaluated the middle strata, especially the peasantry, quite differently. Whereas the vulgar Marxists, after giving up the peasantry and placing it at the complete disposal of capital, vociferously swaggered about their "unswerving adherence to principles"—Marx, most consistent of all Marxists in questions of principle, insistently advised the party of the Communists not to lose sight of the peasantry, to win it over to the side of the proletariat and to make sure of its support in the coming proletarian revolution. It is well known that in the 'fifties, after the defeat of the February Revolution in France and in Germany, Marx wrote to Engels, and through him to the Communist Party of Germany, as follows:

> The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility to back the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War.

This was written about the Germany of the 'fifties, a peasant country, in which the proletariat formed an insignificant minority, in which the proletariat was less organized than in the Russia of 1917, and in which the peasantry, owing to its position, was

less disposed to support a proletarian revolution than was the case in the Russia of 1917.

The October Revolution undoubtedly presented the happy combination of a "peasant war" and a "proletarian revolution" of which Marx wrote, all the chatterboxes and their "principles" notwithstanding. The October Revolution proved that such a combination is both possible and feasible. The October Revolution proved that the proletariat can seize power and maintain it, provided it is able to wrest the middle strata, especially the peasantry, from the capitalist classes, provided it knows how to transform these strata from reserves of capitalism into reserves of the proletariat.

In brief: the October Revolution was the first of all the revolutions of the world to advance to the forefront the question of the middle strata, primarily the peasantry, and to settle it victoriously, all the "theories" and lamentations of the heroes of the Second International notwithstanding.

This constitutes the first service of the October Revolution, if one may speak altogether of services in this case.

However, matters did not rest there. The October Revolution went further, trying to rally the oppressed nationalities round the proletariat. It was stated above that these nationalities consist nine-tenths of peasants and the petty labouring populace of the cities. However, this does not fully characterize the concept "oppressed nationality." The oppressed nationalities are usually oppressed not only as peasantry and the labouring populace of the cities but also as nationalities, *i.e.*, as workers of a definite statehood, language, culture, manner of life, customs and habits. The double weight of oppression cannot but revolutionize the toiling masses of the oppressed nationalities, cannot but urge them on to the struggle against the principal force of oppression—to the struggle against capital. This circumstance served as the base on which the proletariat succeeded in realizing the combination of a "proletarian revolution" and not only a "peasant war" but also a "national war." All this could not fail to extend the field of action of the proletarian revolution far beyond the confines of Russia, could not fail to jeopardize the most deep-seated reserves

of capitalism. If the struggle for the middle strata of a given dominating nationality means the struggle for the immediate reserves of capitalism, the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed nationalities could not but be transformed into a struggle for the conquest of the separate, most deep-seated reserves of capitalism, into a struggle for the liberation of the colonial and partly disfranchised nations from the yoke of capitalism. This latter struggle is not over by far—besides, it has not yet had time to yield even the first decisive successes. However, this struggle for the deep-seated reserves owes its commencement to the October Revolution, and it will undoubtedly develop step by step, commensurate with the development of imperialism, commensurate with the increase in power of our union of republics, commensurate with the development of the proletarian revolution in the West.

In brief: the October Revolution has actually initiated the struggle of the proletariat for the deep-seated reserves of capitalism from among the masses of the people in the oppressed and partly disfranchised countries; it was the first to raise the standard of struggle for winning these reserves—this constitutes its second service.

Winning the peasantry proceeded in our country under the banner of socialism. The peasantry, which had received land at the hands of the proletariat, which had defeated the landlords with the aid of the proletariat, and which had risen to power under the leadership of the proletariat, could not but feel, could not but understand that the process of its liberation proceeded, and would proceed in the future, under the banner of the proletariat, under its Red Banner. This circumstance could not fail to transform the banner of socialism, which was formerly a bogey to the peasantry, into a standard attracting its attention and facilitating its liberation from wretchedness, destitution and oppression. The same must be said with even more emphasis in regard to the oppressed nationalities. The call to struggle for the liberation of the nationalities, a call re-enforced by facts such as the liberation of Finland, the evacuation of troops from Persia and China, the formation of the Union of Republics,

open moral support to the peoples of Turkey, China, Hindustan, Egypt—this call was first sounded by the people who were the victors in the October Revolution. The fact that Russia, which formerly served as the symbol of oppression in the eyes of the oppressed nationalities, has now, after it has become socialist, been transformed into a symbol of liberation, cannot be described as a mere chance. Nor is it accidental that the name of Comrade Lenin, the leader of the October Revolution, is now the most cherished name of the downtrodden, browbeaten peasants and revolutionary intelligentsia of the colonial and semi-enfranchised countries. If formerly Christianity was considered an anchor of salvation among the oppressed and downtrodden slaves of the vast Roman Empire, now things are heading towards a point where socialism can serve (and is already beginning to serve!) as a banner of liberation for the many millions in the vast colonial states of imperialism. It is hardly susceptible of doubt that this circumstance considerably facilitated the struggle to combat the prejudices against socialism and opened the road to the ideas of socialism in the most remote corners of the oppressed countries. If formerly it was difficult for a socialist to show himself with open visor among the non-proletarian middle strata of the oppressed or oppressing countries, today he can openly propagate the idea of socialism among these strata and expect to be listened to and perhaps even followed, for he possesses so cogent an argument as the October Revolution. This is also a result of the October Revolution.

In brief: the October Revolution cleared the path to the ideas of socialism for the middle non-proletarian peasant strata of all nationalities and tribes; it popularized the banner of socialism among them—which constitutes the third service of the October Revolution.

Pravda, No. 253, November 7, 1923.

TROTSKYISM OR LENINISM?

(Speech at the Plenum of the Communist Fraction of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, Delivered on November 19, 1924)

COMRADES! Little remains for me to say after the full report of Comrade Kamenev. I shall confine myself therefore to the exposure of certain legends circulated by Comrade Trotsky and his adherents regarding the October uprising, regarding the role of Comrade Trotsky in the uprising, regarding the Party and the preparation for October, etc. I shall also refer to Trotskyism as a peculiar ideology, incompatible with Leninism, and to the task of the Party in connection with the latest literary contributions of Comrade Trotsky.

I. THE FACTS CONCERNING THE OCTOBER UPRISING

First of all, about the October uprising. A rumour is being persistently circulated among the members of the Party to the effect that the Central Committee as a whole was opposed to the uprising in October 1917. It is usually related that on October 10, when the Central Committee passed the decision to organize the uprising, the majority of the Central Committee at first declared itself against the uprising, but at that moment a worker supposedly rushed into the meeting of the Central Committee and said: "You are deciding against the uprising, but let me tell you that the uprising will take place anyhow, in spite of everything." It is further alleged that after these threats the Central Committee winced, re-opened the question of the uprising and passed a decision to organize an uprising. This is not a mere rumour, comrades. This is stated by the famous John Reed in his book *Ten*

Days that Shook the World. He was remote from our Party and of course could not know the history of our secret meeting of October 10 and therefore fell victim to the gossip which emanated from Messrs. Sukhanov and Co. This tale made the rounds and was then repeated in a number of pamphlets issuing from the pens of Trotskyists, including one of the latest pamphlets on the October Revolution written by Comrade Syrkin. These rumours are strongly supported in the latest literary contributions of Comrade Trotsky. It goes without saying that all these and similar Arabian-Night tales are at variance with the facts and that nothing of the kind took place, or could have taken place, at the meeting of the Central Committee. We might therefore have ignored these absurd rumours: many a rumour is concocted in the private studies of the members of the opposition or persons remote from the Party. And indeed, that is the way we have acted hitherto, paying no attention, for instance, to the errors of John Reed, nor troubling to correct these errors. But after the latest utterances of Comrade Trotsky, it is no longer possible to ignore such legends, for an attempt is made to bring up the youth on such legends, and unfortunately some measure of success has been achieved in this respect. I must therefore counterpose the actual facts to these absurd rumours.

I take the minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party on October 10 (23), 1917. Present: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokolnikov and Lomov. Current events and the question of the uprising are discussed. After a debate, Comrade Lenin's resolution on the uprising is put to a vote. The resolution is passed by a majority vote of ten to two. It seems clear: the Central Committee, by a majority of ten to two, resolved to pass on to the immediate practical work of organizing the uprising. At that very meeting the Central Committee elects a *political* centre to lead the uprising, to be called the Political Bureau and to consist of: Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Trotsky, Sokolnikov and Bubnov.

These are the facts.

These minutes at one stroke destroy several legends. They de-

stroy the legend that the majority of the Central Committee was allegedly opposed to the uprising. They also destroy the legend that the Central Committee was on the point of splitting over the question of the uprising. From the minutes it is clear that the opponents of an immediate uprising—Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev—entered the organ of the political leadership of the uprising on a par with the advocates of the uprising. There was no question, nor could there have been any question, of a split.

Comrade Trotsky assures us that during October we had a Right wing in our Party, represented by Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev, who were almost social-democrats. The only thing not comprehensible is how it could happen that the Party in such event avoided a split; how it could happen that the differences of opinion with Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev lasted only a few days; how it could happen that these comrades, in spite of the differences of opinion, were placed by the Party at very important posts, were elected to the political centre of the uprising, etc. The Party is sufficiently aware of Lenin's relentlessness in regard to social-democrats; the Party knows that Lenin would not for a moment have agreed to keep in the Party, and what is more at most important posts, comrades with a social-democratic frame of mind. How is it to be explained that the Party avoided a split? This is explained by the fact that in spite of the differences of opinion, these comrades were old Bolsheviks who took their stand on the common ground of Bolshevism. What was that common ground? It was the identity of views on fundamental questions: on the character of the Russian Revolution, on the driving forces of the revolution, on the role of the peasantry, on the principles of Party leadership, etc. Without such common ground a split would have been inevitable. No split took place and the differences of opinion lasted only a few days because, and only because Comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev were Leninists, Bolsheviks.

Let us now pass on to the legend about the special role of Comrade Trotsky in the October Revolution. The Trotskyists are intent on spreading a rumour to the effect that Comrade Trotsky was the inspirer and only leader of the October uprising.

These rumours are spread with particular assiduity by Comrade Lenzner, the so-called editor of Comrade Trotsky's works. Comrade Trotsky himself, by systematically avoiding mention of the Party, the Central Committee of the Party and the Leningrad Committee of the Party, by hushing up the leading role of these organizations in the uprising and emphatically pushing himself to the fore as the central figure of the October uprising, intentionally or unintentionally contributes to the dissemination of the rumours about a special role of Comrade Trotsky in the uprising. I am far from denying the undoubtedly important role of Comrade Trotsky in the uprising. But I must state that Comrade Trotsky did not and could not have played any special role in the October uprising; that, being the president of the Petrograd Soviet, he only carried into effect the will of the respective Party authorities, which guided every step of Comrade Trotsky. This may appear strange to philistines like Sukhanov, but the facts, the actual facts, fully and entirely bear out this assertion.

Let us take the minutes of the next meeting of the Central Committee, on October 16, 1917. Present: the members of the Central Committee, plus the representatives of the Leningrad Committee, plus the representatives of the military organization, of the factory committees, of the trade unions, the railway men. In addition to the members of the Central Committee there are present: Krylenko, Shotman, Kalinin, Volodarsky, Shlyapnikov, Latsis and others. Twenty-five persons in all. The question of the uprising is discussed from its purely practical and organizational aspect. Lenin's resolution on the uprising is passed by a majority of twenty to two, three persons abstaining from voting. A *practical* centre is elected to take charge of organizing the uprising. Who is elected to this centre? Five were elected to it: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Bubnov and Uritsky. The tasks of the practical centre were: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising, in accordance with the directives of the Central Committee. Thus, as you see, something "terrible" took place at this meeting of the Central Committee, *i.e.*, "in some mysterious way" the "inspirer," the "principal figure," the "only leader" of the uprising, Comrade

Trotsky, did not get on the practical centre, which was called upon to lead the uprising. How can this be reconciled with the current notion about Comrade Trotsky's special role? Doesn't all this looks somewhat "strange," as Sukhanov or the Trotskyists would say? Yet there is really nothing strange about it, for Comrade Trotsky, who was a relative newcomer in our Party in the period of October, did not, and could not have played any *special* role either in the Party or in the October uprising. Like all the responsible functionaries, he was only executing the will of the Central Committee and its organs. Anyone familiar with the machinery of the leadership of the Bolshevik Party will quite readily understand that it could not have been otherwise: had Comrade Trotsky only acted contrary to the will of the Central Committee, he would have forfeited all influence on the course of events. All talk about a special role of Comrade Trotsky is a legend, spread by obliging "Party" gossip-mongers.

This does not, of course, mean that the October uprising did not have its inspirer. No, it did have its inspirer and leader. But that was Lenin and not somebody else, the same Lenin whose resolutions were passed by the Central Committee when it decided the question of the uprising, the same Lenin who though "underground," was not prevented thereby from being the true inspirer of the uprising, in spite of Comrade Trotsky's assertion. It is stupid and ridiculous to try now by chatter about underground life to camouflage the undoubted fact that V. I. Lenin, the leader of the Party, was the inspirer of the uprising.

Such are the facts.

Some say: Let us admit this, still it is impossible to deny that Comrade Trotsky fought well at the time of October. Yes, that is true, Comrade Trotsky really fought well during October. But Comrade Trotsky was not the only one who fought well during the period of October; even such people as the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who then stood shoulder to shoulder with the Bolsheviks, did not fight badly. In general I must state that during a victorious uprising, when the enemy is isolated and the rebellion is spreading, it is not difficult to fight well. In such moments even backward people become heroes. However, the

struggle of the proletariat is not a solid advance, a solid series of successes. The struggle of the proletariat has also it trials, its reverses. Not he who displays courage in the period of a victorious uprising is a genuine revolutionary, but he who, while being able to fight well during the victorious advance of the revolution, is also able to display courage during the period when the revolution is in retreat, when the proletariat is defeated; who does not lose his head and flinch when the revolution meets with setbacks, when the enemy gains successes; who does not become panic-stricken and seized with despair during the period when the revolution is in retreat. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries did not fight badly in support of the Bolsheviks during October. However, who does not know that these "brave" fighters became panic-stricken during the Brest period, when the advance of German imperialism plunged them into despair and hysterics. It is an extremely sad but undoubted fact that Comrade Trotsky, who fought well during the October period, lacked the courage during the Brest period, the period when the revolution received temporary setbacks, to show sufficient firmness at that difficult moment and not to follow in the footsteps of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Beyond dispute the moment was difficult, it was necessary to display special courage and iron self-control in order not to become confused, to retreat in time, to accept the peace terms in time, to withdraw the proletarian army from the blows of German imperialism, to preserve the peasant reserves, and after thus obtaining a respite to strike at the enemy with renewed vigour. However, Comrade Trotsky unfortunately did not display such courage and such revolutionary firmness at that difficult moment. In the opinion of Comrade Trotsky, the fundamental lesson of the proletarian revolution consists in not having flinched at the time of October. This is wrong, for this assertion of Comrade Trotsky's contains only a fraction of the truth about the lessons of the revolution. The whole truth about the lessons of the proletarian revolution consists in "not flinching" not only in the days when the revolution is advancing, but also in the days of its retreat, when the enemy is gaining the upper hand and the revolution suffers reverses. The revolution has not been

exhausted by October. October is only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad enough if flinching is evinced during an uprising in the ascendent. It is still worse when there is flinching after the seizure of power when the revolution is undergoing heavy ordeals. To retain power the day after the revolution is no less important than to seize power. If Comrade Trotsky flinched during the Brest period, at a time when our revolution was passing through a severe trial, when matters went almost as far as the surrender of power, he must understand that the October mistakes of Kamenev and Zinoviev had absolutely nothing to do with it.

Such is the case with the legends about the October uprising.

II. The Party and the Preparation for October

Let us now pass on to the question of the preparation for October.

If one listens to Comrade Trotsky, one might think the Party of the Bolsheviks during the entire preparatory period from March to October did nothing but mark time, was torn by internal contradictions and hampered Lenin in every way, and that but for Comrade Trotsky no one knows what would have been the ending of the October Revolution. It is somewhat amusing to hear these strange speeches about the Party from the mouth of Comrade Trotsky, who declared in the same "Preface" to the third volume that the "Party serves as the principal instrument of the proletarian revolution," that "without the Party, over the head of the Party, by eluding the Party, by means of a substitute for the Party, the proletarian revolution cannot win," and Allah himself will fail to understand how our revolution could be victorious, if "its basic instrument" proved unserviceable, while there is no possibility—so it turns out—of winning "by eluding the Party." However, it is not the first time that Comrade Trotsky treats us to his antics. It is to be assumed that the amusing speeches about our Party are part and parcel of the usual oddities of Comrade Trotsky.

Let us briefly review the history of the preparation for October according to periods:

1) *The period of the new orientation of the Party (March-April).* The principal facts of this period: a) overthrow of tsarism, b) formation of the Provisional Government (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie), c) appearance of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry), d) diarchy, e) April demonstration, f) first government crisis.

The characteristic trait of this period is the fact that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry simultaneously co-exist side by side, the latter dictatorship confiding in the former, believing in its peaceful aspirations, voluntarily yielding its power to the bourgeoisie and thus transforming itself into its appendage. So far, there are no serious conflicts between the two dictatorships. On the contrary, there is a "liaison commission."

This was a very great turning point in the history of Russia and an unprecedented turn in the history of our Party. The old pre-revolutionary platform of the direct overthrow of the government was clear and definite, but it no longer fitted the new conditions of struggle. Now it was no longer possible to advance directly to the overthrow of the government, because it was bound up with the soviets, which were under the influence of the defencists, and the Party would have had to wage war both against the government and against the soviets, which was beyond its strength. However, it was also impossible to follow the policy of supporting the Provisional Government, for it was a government of imperialism. In the conditions of struggle a new orientation of the Party became necessary. The Party (its majority) gropingly proceeded to this new orientation. It adopted the policy of having the soviets exercise pressure on the Provisional Government in the question of peace, and did not venture all at once to take any step beyond the old slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry to the new slogan of the rule of the soviets. This half-way policy was intended to enable the soviets to perceive the truly imperialist nature of the Provisional Govern-

ment from the concrete questions of peace and thereby rip the soviets loose from the Provisional Government. However, this position was utterly erroneous, for it begot pacifist illusions, poured water on the mill of defencism and hampered the revolutionary education of the masses. In those days I shared this erroneous position with other Party comrades, and completely renounced it only in the middle of April, when I endorsed Lenin's theses.* A new orientation was necessary. Lenin gave the Party this new orientation in his famous April theses. I do not enlarge on these theses, as they are known to all. Were there any differences of opinion between the Party and Lenin at that time? Yes, there were. How long did these differences of opinion last? Not more than two weeks. The All-City Conference of the Leningrad organization (second half of April), which adopted Lenin's theses, was a turning point in the development of our Party. The All-Russian April Conference (end of April) only completed the work of the Leningrad Conference on an All-Russian scale, welding nine-tenths of its members to the unified position of the Party.

Now, after seven years, Comrade Trotsky takes malignant joy in the former differences of opinion among the Bolsheviks, depicting these differences of opinion as verging on a struggle of two parties within Bolshevism. However, in the first place, Comrade Trotsky unconscionably overdoes matters in this connection, for the Party of the Bolsheviks passed through these dissentions without the slightest tremor. Second, our Party would have been a caste and not a revolutionary party had it not allowed certain shades of opinion in its midst, and it is well known that we had differences of opinion also in the past, *e.g.*, at the time of the Third Duma, which, however, did not prevent unity in our Party. Third, it will not be amiss to ask what was *then* the position of Comrade Trotsky himself, who is *now* rejoicing with such malignant glee in the former differences of opinion among the Bolsheviks? Comrade Lenzner, the so-called editor of the works of

* It is well-known that Comrade Zinoviev, whom Comrade Trotsky is ready to transform into a "Hilferdingian," fully and completely shared Lenin's point of view.

Comrade Trotsky, assures us that the American letters of Comrade Trotsky (March), "fully anticipated" Lenin's *Letters from Afar* (March), which lay at the basis of Lenin's April theses. These are the very words used: "fully anticipated." Comrade Trotsky does not object to such an analogy, apparently accepting it with gratitude. However, in the first place, Comrade Trotsky's letters are "altogether unlike" Lenin's letters both in spirit and in their conclusion, for they fully reflect Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik slogan: "No tsar, but a workers' government," a slogan which means a revolution *without* the peasantry. It suffices to glance through these two sets of letters to become convinced of this. Second, in such a case, how are we to explain the fact that Lenin deemed it necessary to dissociate himself from Comrade Trotsky the very next day after his arrival from abroad? Who does not know of the repeated statements of Lenin to the effect that Trotsky's slogan "No tsar, but a workers' government" is an attempt to "skip the peasant movement, which has not yet outlived itself," that this slogan means "playing at seizing power by a workers' government?" *

What can there be in common between Lenin's Bolshevik theses and the anti-Bolshevik scheme of Comrade Trotsky with its "playing at seizing power"? Where do people get this passion of comparing a hovel to Mont Blanc? Why was it necessary for Comrade Lenzner to pile on this risky addition to the heap of old legends about our revolution, this further legend about Trotsky's "anticipating" Lenin's famous *Letters from Afar* in his American letters? **

* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Volume XX, Part I, p. 124, "Letters on Tactics." See also Reports at the Leningrad All-City Conference and at the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Communist Party (middle and end of April 1917).

** One of these legends is the very widely circulated version about Trotsky's having been the "only" or "chief organizer" of the victories on the civil war fronts. In the interest of truth I must declare, comrades, that this version is altogether at variance with the facts. I am far from denying the important role Comrade Trotsky played in the civil war. But I must declare with the utmost emphasis that the high honour of organizing our victories belongs not to any individual person, but to the great collective of front-rank workers of our country—the Russian Communist Party. Perhaps it would not be amiss to cite a few instances. You know that Kolchak

There is good reason for saying that an obliging bear is more dangerous than an enemy.

2) *The period of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses (May-August).* The principal facts of this period are: a) the April demonstration in Leningrad and the formation of a coalition government with the participation of "socialists"; b) the First of May demonstrations in the principal centres of Russia under the slogan of "democratic peace"; c) the June demonstration in Leningrad under the main slogan of "Down with the Capitalist Ministers!" d) the June offensive at the front and the reverses of the Russian army; e) the July armed demonstra-

and Denikin were regarded as the principal enemies of the Soviet republic. You know that our country breathed freely only after conquering these enemies. And history records that our army finally routed both these enemies, *i.e.*, both Kolchak and Denikin, *in spite* of the plans of Comrade Trotsky. Judge for yourselves:

1. *About Kolchak.* It is the summer of 1919. Our army advances against Kolchak and operates near Ufa. There is a meeting of the Central Committee. Comrade Trotsky proposes to hold back the advance on the line of the Byelaya River (near Ufa), leaving the Urals in the hands of Kolchak, to remove some of the troops from the Eastern front and throw them across to the Southern front. A heated debate takes place. The Central Committee does not agree with Comrade Trotsky, finding that the Urals with their factories and railway network ought not to be left in the hands of Kolchak, as he could easily recuperate there, rally his forces and appear once more on the Volga—it is necessary first to drive Kolchak beyond the Ural mountain chain into the steppes of Siberia and only thereafter engage in diverting forces south. The Central Committee rejects Comrade Trotsky's plan. The latter resigns. The Central Committee does not accept his resignation. Vatsetis, the commander-in-chief, who supports Comrade Trotsky's plan, resigns. His place is taken by a new commander-in-chief, Comrade Kamenev. From this moment, Comrade Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the operations of the Eastern front.

2. About Denikin. It is the autumn of 1919. The advance against Denikin fails. The "steel ring" around Mamontov (Mamontov's raid) is an obvious failure. Denikin takes Kursk. Denikin approaches Orel. Comrade Trotsky is summoned from the Southern front to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. The Central Committee recognizes the position as alarming and decides to recall Comrade Trotsky and dispatch new military workers to the Southern front. The new military workers demand that Comrade Trotsky stop "interfering" with the operations on the Southern front. Comrade Trotsky withdraws from direct participation in the operations on the Southern front. The operations on the Southern front, up to and including our capture of Rostov-on-Don and Odessa, proceed without Comrade Trotsky.

Let anyone try to disprove these facts.

tion in Leningrad, the withdrawal of the Cadet ministers from the government; f) the bringing of counter-revolutionary troops from the front, the demolition of the editorial offices of *Pravda,* the struggle of the counter-revolution against the soviets and the formation of a new coalition government headed by Kerensky; g) the Sixth Congress of the Party, which issued the slogan of preparing for the armed uprising; h) the counter-revolutionary State Conference and the general strike in Moscow; i) the unsuccessful advance of Kornilov on Leningrad, the revival of the soviets, the resignation of the Cadets and the formation of the "Directorate."

The intensification of the crisis and the disturbance of the unstable equilibrium between the Soviets and the Provisional Government, which for better or for worse existed during the preceding period, must be considered the characteristic features of this period. Diarchy has become intolerable to both sides. The frail body of the "liaison commission" is on its last legs. "Governmental crisis" and "ministerial leap-frog" were on everybody's tongue in those days. The crisis at the front and the chaos in the rear were having their effect, strengthening the extreme wings and pressing the conciliationists and the defencists from both sides. The revolution is being mobilized, calling forth the mobilization of the counter-revolution. The counter-revolution in its turn whips up the revolution and evokes a new surge of the revolutionary tide. The question of the transfer of power to a new class becomes the burning question of the hour.

Were there any differences of opinion within our Party at that time? Yes, there were. But they were exclusively of a practical nature, in spite of the assertions of Comrade Trotsky who tries to discover a "Right" and a "Left" wing in the Party, *i.e.,* these differences of opinion were such that, generally speaking, without them there is no active Party life, no real Party work.

Comrade Trotsky is wrong when he assures us that the April demonstration in Leningrad evoked dissensions within the Central Committee. The Central Committee was absolutely united on this question, condemning the attempt of a group of comrades to arrest the Provisional Government at a time when the Bolsheviks

constituted a minority both in the soviets and in the army. Had Comrade Trotsky written the "history" of the October Revolution not *à la* Sukhanov, but according to actual documents, he would easily have convinced himself of the erroneousness of his assertion.

Comrade Trotsky is absolutely wrong when he asserts that the attempt "on Lenin's initiative" to organize a demonstration on June 9 was decried as "adventurism" by the "Right" members of the Central Committee. If Comrade Trotsky had not written *à la* Sukhanov, he would have known for certain that the demonstration of June 9 was postponed in full agreement with Lenin, and the postponement was even defended by Lenin, in his great speech at the famous meeting of the Leningrad Committee (see minutes of the Leningrad Committee).

Comrade Trotsky is absolutely wrong when he speaks of "tragic" dissensions within the Central Committee in connection with the July armed demonstration. Comrade Trotsky is simply fabricating when he presumes that certain members of the leading group of the Central Committee "must have regarded the July episode as a harmful adventure." Comrade Trotsky, who at that time was not yet a member of our Central Committee and who was only our soviet parliamentarian, might, of course, not have known that the Central Committee regarded the July demonstration only as a means of probing the enemy, that the Central Committee (and Lenin) did not want to transform, and did not even think of transforming, the demonstration into an uprising, at a time when the soviets of the capital were still backing the defencists. It is quite possible that some of the Bolsheviks were actually whining in connection with the July defeat. I am aware, for instance, that some of the Bolsheviks arrested at that time were even ready to quit our ranks. But to draw conclusions on that account against some alleged "Rights," supposedly members of the Central Committee, is tantamount to distorting history in defiance of all decency.

Comrade Trotsky is wrong when he declares that during the Kornilov days a section of the leaders of the Party displayed a tendency to form a *bloc* with the defencists to support the Provisional Government. This has reference, of course, to those same

alleged "Rights" who are disturbing Comrade Trotsky's peace of mind. Comrade Trotsky is wrong, since documents are in existence, such as the central organ of the Party of that period, which upset Comrade Trotsky's assertions. Comrade Trotsky cites Lenin's letter to the Central Committee with a warning against supporting Kerensky. But Comrade Trotsky does not understand Lenin's letters, their significance, their object. Lenin in his letters sometimes intentionally runs ahead, bringing into the limelight *possible* errors that might be committed and criticizing them in advance, for the purpose of warning the Party and ensuring it against mistakes; or sometimes he overstates a "trifling incident" and makes a "fly look like an elephant" to the same pedagogic end. A leader of the Party, especially if he lives "underground," cannot act otherwise, for he must see further ahead than his comrade-at-arms and is in duty bound to sound the alarm over every possible mistake and even over "trifling incidents." But to draw the conclusion from such letters of Lenin's (and there are quite a few such letters of his) that there were "tragic" differences of opinion and to trumpet it about means not to understand the letters of Lenin, not to know Lenin. This may explain why Trotsky sometimes hits exceedingly wide of the mark. In brief: in the days of the Kornilov action there were no, virtually no, dissensions in the Central Committee.

After the July defeat, there really arose a difference of opinion between the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the fate of the soviets. It is well known that Lenin, wishing to focus the attention of the Party on the preparation for an uprising outside the soviets, warned against becoming infatuated with the soviets, figuring that the soviets defiled by the defencists, had already become a hollow shell. The Central Committee and the Sixth Congress of the Party adopted a more cautious line, holding that there was no ground for believing a revival of the soviets impossible. The Kornilov affair showed that that decision was correct. However, this difference of opinion was of no practical importance to the Party. Subsequently Lenin acknowledged that the line taken up by the Sixth Congress was correct. It is interesting to note that Comrade Trotsky did not clutch at this difference of

opinion and did not magnify it to "monstrous" proportions.

A united, well-knit party occupying the centre of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses—such is the picture of the state of our Party during this period.

3) *The period of the organization of the assault (September-October).* The basic facts of this period are: a) the convocation of the Democratic Conference and the failure of the idea of a *bloc* with the Cadets; b) the passing over of the Moscow and Leningrad Soviets to the side of the Bolsheviks; c) the Congress of the Soviets of the Northern Region and the decision of the Leningrad Soviet opposing the withdrawal of the troops; d) the decision of the Central Committee of the Party on the uprising and the formation of the Military-Revolutionary Committee of the Leningrad Soviet; e) the decision of the Leningrad garrison to give armed support to the Leningrad Soviet and the organization of a system of commissars of the Military-Revolutionary Committee; f) the action of the Bolshevik armed forces and the arrest of the members of the Provisional Government; g) the seizure of power by the Military-Revolutionary Committee of the Leningrad Soviet and the establishment of a Council of People's Commissars by the Second Congress of Soviets.

The rapid growth of the crisis, the utter confusion in the ruling circles, the isolation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and of the Mensheviks and the mass desertion of the vacillating elements to the side of the Bolsheviks must be considered the characteristic feature of this period. One unique feature of the tactics of the revolution during this period deserves to be noted. This feature consists in this: that the revolution tries to make every, or almost every, step of its offensive look like a defensive measure. The refusal to evacuate the army was undoubtedly a serious offensive step of the revolution, yet this offensive was effected under the slogan of the defence of Leningrad against a possible attack by the foreign enemy. Undoubtedly the formation of the Military-Revolutionary Committee was an even more grave offensive step, directed against the Provisional Government, yet it was carried out under the slogan of organizing Soviet control over the activities of the district military headquarters. Undoubtedly the open

passing over of the garrison to the side of the Military-Revolutionary Committee and the organization of a network of Soviet commissars betokened the beginning of an uprising, yet these steps were carried out by the revolution under the slogan of the defence of the Leningrad Soviet against any possible action by the counter-revolution. The revolution seemed to camouflage its offensive steps with a smoke-screen of defence, in order to draw the hesitant, vacillating elements the more easily within its orbit. This may explain the outwardly defensive character of the speeches, articles and slogans of this period, which none the less are of a profoundly aggressive nature as regards their inner content.

Were there any differences of opinion during that period within the Central Committee? Yes, there were, and they were of no small importance. I have already mentioned the differences of opinion regarding the uprising. They were fully reflected in the minutes of the Central Committee of October 10 and 16. Therefore, I shall not repeat what was stated before. It is now necessary to dwell on three questions: on participation in the Pre-Parliament, on the role of the soviets in the uprising and on timing the uprising. This is the more necessary since Comrade Trotsky in his zeal to thrust himself into a conspicuous place has "inadvertently" misrepresented Lenin's position on the last two questions.

There is no doubt that the differences of opinion on the question of the Pre-Parliament were of a serious nature. What was really the object of the Pre-Parliament? It was to help the bourgeoisie push the soviets into the background and to lay the foundations of bourgeois parliamentarism. It is another question whether the Pre-Parliament could fulfil this task in the revolutionary situation which had taken shape. Events showed that this object could not be attained and that the Pre-Parliament itself was but the abortive fruit of the Kornilov affair. But the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries undoubtedly pursued precisely this purpose when they set up the Pre-Parliament. What could the participation of the Bolsheviks in the Pre-Parliament mean under such conditions? Nothing more or less than a misleading of the proletarian masses in regard to the actual complexion of the Pre-Parliament. This largely explains the passion

with which Lenin, in his letters, castigates the advocates of participation in the Pre-Parliament. Participation in the Pre-Parliament was undoubtedly a serous mistake. But it would be a mistake to imagine, as Comrade Trotsky does, that the advocates of participation entered the Pre-Parliament for the purpose of doing organic work, for the purpose of "directing the labour movement" "into the channel of Social-Democracy." This is altogether wrong. This is not true. Had this been right, the Party would not have succeeded in eliminating this error "in no time," by a demonstrative exit from the Pre-Parliament. The vitality and revolutionary power of our Party expressed itself, incidentally, in that it instantly corrected this mistake. And then, allow me to correct a small inexactitude which found its way into the communication of Comrade Lenzner, the "editor" of Comrade Trotsky's works and which concerns the meeting of the Bolshevik fraction that settled the question of the Pre-Parliament. Comrade Lenzner informs us that there were two reporters at this meeting: Kamenev and Trotsky. This is wrong. As a matter of fact there were four reporters: two spoke in favour of boycotting the Pre-Parliament (Trotsky and Stalin) and two were for participation (Kamenev and Nogin).

Comrade Trotsky fares worse yet when dealing with Lenin's position in regard to the form of the uprising. Trotsky implies that, according to Lenin, the Party was to seize power in October "independent of the soviet and behind its back." (*Cf. On Lenin*, [Russian] p. 71.) Afterwards in criticizing this balderdash ascribed to Lenin, Comrade Trotsky skips and frolics about and in the end delivers himself of the following patronizing phrase: "This would have been a mistake." Comrade Trotsky is here telling an untruth about Lenin; he distorts Lenin's view on the role of the soviets in the uprising. A heap of documents could be adduced to prove that Lenin proposed to seize power through the soviets. either the Leningrad or the Moscow Soviet, and not *behind the back* of the soviets. Why did Comrade Trotsky need this more than strange legend about Lenin?

Nor does Trotsky improve matters when he "analyses" the position of the Central Committee and of Lenin on timing the

uprising. When reporting the famous Central Committee meeting of October 10, Comrade Trotsky asserts that at this meeting "a resolution was carried to the effect that the uprising was to take place not later than October 15." (*Cf. On Lenin,* [Russian] p. 72.) He would have the Central Committee time the uprising for October 15, and then break this decision by putting off the date of the uprising to October 25. Is this right? No, it is not. During this period the Central Committee adopted only two resolutions on the uprising—one on October 10 and one on October 16. Let us read these resolutions.

The Central Committee resolution of October 10 reads:

The Central Committee recognizes that the international position of the Russian revolution (the mutiny in the German navy, as an extreme token of the growth of the world socialist revolution throughout the whole of Europe; the threat of peace among the imperialists,* for the purpose of stifling the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the undoubted intention of the Russian bourgeoisie and of Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans); and winning the majority in the soviets by the proletarian party—all this taken in connection with the peasant uprising and the change in the peoples' confidence in favour of our Party (elections in Moscow); finally the obvious preparation for a second Kornilov affair (the evacuation of troops from Petrograd, the moving of Cossacks to Petrograd, the encirclement of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.), all this places the armed uprising on the order of the day.

Recognizing thus that an armed uprising is inevitable and has fully matured, the Central Committee instructs all the organizations of the Party to be guided accordingly and discuss and settle all practical questions from this point of view (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of the troops from Petrograd, the action taken by the people of Moscow and of Minsk, etc.)

The resolution of the conference of the Central Committee with the responsible Party workers, dated October 16, reads:

The meeting whole-heartedly greets and fully supports the resolution of the Central Committee, calls on all organizations and on all workers and soldiers for an all-sided and most intense preparation of the armed uprising, for the support of the centre set up by the Central Committee for that purpose, and expresses its full conviction that the Central Committee and the soviet will indicate in due time a favourable moment and expedient methods of attack.

You see, Comrade Trotsky's memory failed him as regards the date of the uprising and the resolution of the Central Committee concerning the uprising.

* Obviously this should read "separate peace."

Comrade Trotsky is altogether wrong when he asserts that Lenin underestimated soviet legality, that Lenin failed to understand the great importance of the seizure of power by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets on October 25, that allegedly it was precisely for that reason that Lenin insisted on the seizure of power prior to October 25. This is wrong. Lenin proposed the seizure of power prior to October 25 for two reasons. First, because the counter-revolutionaries could surrender Leningrad at any moment, which action would bleed white the incipient uprising and because for that very reason every day was precious. Second, because the mistake of the Leningrad Soviet, which had *openly* fixed and broadcast the date of the uprising (October 25), could not be corrected otherwise than by an actual uprising prior to this legal date of the uprising. The fact of the matter is that Lenin regarded an uprising as a work of art and he could not fail to know that an enemy informed (owing to the lack of caution on the part of the Leningrad Soviet) of the date of the uprising would try without fail to prepare himself for that day, and that, therefore, it was necessary to forestall the enemy, *i.e.*, to begin the uprising absolutely *before* the legal date. This largely explains the passion with which Lenin, in his letters, castigated the fetishists of a date—of October 25. Events proved that Lenin was absolutely right. It is common knowledge that the uprising started before the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It is common knowledge that power was actually seized before the opening of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and that it was seized not by the Congress of Soviets but by the Leningrad Soviet, by the Military-Revolutionary Committee. The Congress of Soviets merely *accepted* power at the hands of the Leningrad Soviet. That is why the long disquisitions of Comrade Trotsky about the importance of soviet legality are altogether superfluous.

A live and powerful party, standing at the head of the revolutionary masses, storming and overthrowing the bourgeois power —such was the state of our Party during that period.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the preparation for October.

III. Trotskyism or Leninism?

We spoke above about the legends against the Party and about Lenin, legends spread by Comrade Trotsky and his confreres in connection with October and its preparation. We exposed and refuted these legends. But the question is: for what purpose did Comrade Trotsky need all these legends about October and about the preparation for October, about Lenin and Lenin's party? What need was there for new literary moves by Comrade Trotsky against the Party? What is the meaning, the aim and object of these moves now, when the Party does not want discussions, when the Party is overwhelmed with a multitude of pressing tasks, when the Party needs good team-work in restoring the economy of the country, not a new struggle over old questions? Why was it necessary for Comrade Trotsky to drag the Party backwards into new discussions?

Comrade Trotsky assures us that all this is necessary to "study" October. But is it really impossible to study October without once more kicking the Party and Lenin, its leader? What is this "history" of October which begins and ends by uncrowning the principal promoter of the October uprising as well as the Party which organized and carried out this uprising? No, here it is not a question of studying October. That is *not the way* to study October. That is not the way to write the history of October. Obviously the "intent" here is different. This "intent" according to all indications, consists in this: that Comrade Trotsky, in his literary moves, makes one more (one more!) attempt to prepare the ground for substituting Trotskyism for Leninism. To Comrade Trotsky the uncrowning of the Party, of its cadres, which carried out the uprising, represents a "desperate" need to permit him to pass from the uncrowning of the Party to the uncrowning of Leninism. And the uncrowning of Leninism is necessary for smuggling in Trotskyism as the "only" "proletarian" (no joke!) ideology. All this is done, of course (of course!) under the flag of Leninism, so that the smuggling operation may come off "as painlessly as possible."

That is the gist of the latest literary moves of Comrade Trotsky.

Therefore, these literary moves of Comrade Trotsky's squarely raise the question of Trotskyism.

What, then, is Trotskyism?

Trotskyism presents three peculiarities, which place it in irreconcilable contradiction to Leninism. What are these peculiarities?

First, Trotskyism is the theory of permanent (uninterrupted) revolution. And what is permanent revolution in its Trotskyist conception? It is revolution which fails to take the poor peasantry into account as a revolutionary force. In the words of Lenin, Comrade Trotsky's permanent revolution means "skipping" the peasant movement, means "playing at seizing power." Wherein lies its danger? In that such a revolution, if an attempt were made to realize it, would inevitably end in failure, for it would sever its ally, *i.e.*, the poor peasantry, from the Russian proletariat. This, too, explains the struggle which Leninism has been waging against Trotskyism ever since 1905. How does Comrade Trotsky evaluate Leninism from the point of view of this struggle? He regards it as a theory which contains "anti-revolutionary features." (*Cf. The Year 1905.*) Upon what is this sullen opinion about Leninism based? It is based on the fact that Leninism used to defend, and successfully upheld at the time, the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and *of the peasantry. (Cf. Ibid.)* However, Comrade Trotsky does not confine himself to this sullen opinion. He goes further and asserts that:

> The whole structure of Leninism is at present based on lies and falsification and harbours the poisonous germs of its own decomposition. (*Cf.* Comrade Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze, dated April 1, 1913.)

As you see, we have before us two opposite lines.

Second, Trotskyism means lack of confidence in the Bolshevik Party allegiance, in its monolithic nature, in its hostility towards opportunist elements. Trotskyism in the sphere of organization is the theory of the co-habitation of revolutionaries and opportunists, of their groups and grouplets within the fold of a single party. You must be acquainted with the history of Comrade Trotsky's "August *bloc*," in which the Martovists and Otsovists, the

liquidators and the Trotskyists, worked in happy collaboration, pretending to be a "real" party. As is well known, this motley "party" pursued the aim of destroying the Bolshevik Party. Wherein did "our differences of opinion" consist at that time? In that Leninism visioned the guarantee of the development of the proletarian party in the destruction of the "August *bloc*," whereas Trotskyism saw in this *bloc* the basis for the creation of a "real" party.

Again, as you see, two opposite lines.

Third, Trotskyism means distrust in the leaders of Bolshevism, an attempt at discrediting them, at uncrowning them. I know of no tendency in the Party which could compare with Trotskyism in the matter of discrediting the leaders of Leninism and the central institutions of the Party. What shall we make of the "amiable" opinion passed by Comrade Trotsky on Lenin, who is characterized by him as a "professional exploiter of every backward feature in the Russian labour movement." (*Cf.* the letter to Chekheidze cited above.) Yet this is far from being the "most amiable" opinion of all the existing "amiable" opinions of Comrade Trotsky.

How could it happen that Comrade Trotsky, who was carrying such an unpleasant burden on his back, none the less turned up in the ranks of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? This happened because Comrade Trotsky threw off (actually threw off) his burden at that time, concealed it in his cupboard. But for this "operation" no serious collaboration with Comrade Trotsky would have been possible. The theory of the "August *bloc*," *i.e.*, the theory of unity with the Mensheviks, had already been defeated and scrapped by the revolution, for how could there be any talk of unity with armed conflict raging between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks? The only thing left for Comrade Trotsky was to acknowledge the impracticability of this theory. The theory of permanent revolution had a similarly unpleasant experience, for none of the Bolsheviks entertained any thought of immediately seizing power the day after the February Revolution, while Comrade Trotsky could not be ignorant of the fact that the Bolsheviks would not allow him, to use Lenin's words, any "play-

ing at seizing power." The only thing left for Comrade Trotsky was to endorse the policy of the Bolsheviks as regards the struggle for influence in the soviets and the struggle to win the peasantry. As regards that third peculiarity of Trotskyism (distrust in the Bolshevik leaders) it naturally had to recede to the background, owing to the palpable failure of the first two peculiarities.

Could Comrade Trotsky, in such a state of affairs, do anything else but conceal his burden in his cupboard and follow the Bolsheviks, he who did not have any more or less serious group behind him, who came to the Bolsheviks as a one-man political organization bereft of its army? Of course he could not!

What is the lesson derived from this? Only one lesson: prolonged collaboration between the Leninists and Comrade Trotsky is possible only if the latter completely casts off his old burden, if he completely espouses Leninism. Comrade Trotsky writes about the lessons of October, but he forgets that apart from all the other lessons, there is one more lesson of October, which has just been related by me and which is of first-rate importance for Trotskyism. It would not hurt Trotskyism to take stock of this lesson of October also.

However, Trotskyism has apparently not profited by this lesson. The fact is that the old burden of Trotskyism, concealed in the cupboard in the days of the October movement, is now once more hauled into the light of day in the hope of finding a market for it—as good fortune would have it, our market is expanding. There is no doubt that in Comrade Trotsky's new literary contributions, we have an attempt to revert to Trotskyism, to "overcome" Leninism, to smuggle in and to implant all the peculiarities of Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism is not a mere repetition of the old Trotskyism; it has undergone quite some plucking and pruning, it is incomparably milder in spirit and more moderate in form than the old Trotskyism, but it undoubtedly preserves essentially every peculiarity of the old Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism does not venture to come out as a belligerent force against Leninism; it prefers to operate under the common banner of Leninism, to manipulate under the slogan of interpreting, of improving Leninism. That is so because it is weak. The fact that

the activities of the new Trotskyism coincided with Lenin's departure cannot be regarded as fortuitous. He would not have ventured to take this risky step if Lenin had still been alive.

What are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism?

1) *On the question of permanent revolution.* The new Trotskyism does not deem it necessary openly to champion the theory of permanent revolution. It "merely" records that the October Revolution has fully confirmed the idea of permanent revolution. From this it draws the following conclusion: whatever occurred after the war, during the period of the October Revolution, is important and acceptable in Leninism, and, on the contrary, whatever occurred before the war, before the October Revolution, is both wrong and inacceptable in Leninism. Hence, the Trotskyists' theory of dissecting Leninism into two parts: pre-war Leninism, the "old," "unserviceable" Leninism, with its idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and the new, postwar, October Leninism which they expect to adapt to the requirements of Trotskyism. Trotskyism needs this theory of dissecting Leninism as a first more or less "acceptable" step necessary to facilitate its subsequent steps in the struggle against Leninism. However, Leninism is not an eclectic theory, pieced together from heterogeneous elements and admitting of possible dissection. Leninism is an integral theory which arose in 1903, which went through the ordeals of three revolutions and which is now marching onward as the militant banner of the world proletariat. Lenin said:

> Bolshevism, as a trend of political thought and as a political party, exists since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *whole period* of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline necessary for the victory of the proletariat. (*Cf.* "*Left-Wing*" *Communism*, Chap. 2.)

Bolshevism and Leninism are one. They are two names for one and the same thing. Therefore, the theory of dissecting Leninism into two parts is a theory of destroying Leninism, a theory substituting Trotskyism for Leninism.

There is no need to state that the Party cannot reconcile itself to this strange theory.

2) *On the question of the Party allegiance.* The old Trotskyism undermined the Bolshevik Party spirit by means of its theory (and practice) of unity with the Mensheviks. However, this theory has been so thoroughly discredited that people nowadays do not even want to call it to mind. In order to undermine the Party allegiance, present-day Trotskyism thought up a new, less scandalous and almost "democratic" theory of counterposing the old cadres to the young generation in the Party. For Trotskyism, no single and integral history of our Party exists. Trotskyism divides the history of our Party into two parts of unequal value —the pre- and the post-October parts. The pre-October part of the history of our Party is, properly speaking, not a history, but a "pre-history," an unimportant, or at any rate not a very important, preparatory period of our Party. However, the post-October part of the history of our Party is the real, genuine history. There you have the "old," "pre-historic," unimportant cadres of our Party. Here you have the new, real, "historical" party. There is hardly any necessity to prove that this odd scheme of the history of the Party is a scheme that undermines the unity between the old and the new cadres of our Party, a scheme that destroys the Bolshevik Party allegiance.

There is no need to state that the Party cannot reconcile itself to this odd scheme.

3) *On the question of the leaders of Bolshevism.* The old Trotskyism attempted to uncrown Lenin more or less openly, without fear of consequences. The new Trotskyism proceeds more cautiously. It tries to do the work of the old Trotskyism under the guise of extolling Lenin, under the guise of glorifying him. I believe it worth while to cite a few instances.

The Party knows Lenin as a relentless revolutionary. But it also knows that Lenin was cautious, did not like people who overdo things, and often with a firm hand put down those too fond of terror, including Comrade Trotsky himself. Comrade Trotsky deals with this theme in his book, *On Lenin.* However, from his characterization, it would follow that Lenin did nothing but "hammer away on every suitable occasion at the idea of the inevitability of terror." (*Cf.* p. 104.) The impression is created

that Lenin was the most bloodthirsty of all the bloodthirsty Bolsheviks. Why need Comrade Trotsky have laid on the colours so heavily when this was unnecessary and altogether unjustified?

The Party knows Lenin as a model Party member, who did not like to settle questions by himself, without a leading collegium, cursorily, without careful probing and verification. In his book Comrade Trotsky refers to this aspect of the case also. However, the person issuing forth from his pen is not Lenin but some Chinese mandarin, who settles the most important questions in the quiet of his study, by inspiration.

Do you want to know how our Party decided the question of the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly? Listen to Comrade Trotsky:

> Lenin said: "Of course, it is necessary to disperse the Constituent Assembly, but what about the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries?"
>
> However, we were greatly consoled by old man Nathanson. He came to "consult" us and right at the start said:
>
> "You see, it will probably be necessary to disperse the Constituent Assembly by force."
>
> "Bravo!" exclaimed Lenin, "you cannot get away from the truth! But will your people consent to it"?
>
> "Some of our people are wavering, but I think that in the end they will agree," replied Nathanson. *(Cf.* p. 92.)

That is the way some people write history.

Do you want to know how the Party decided the question of the Supreme War Council? Just listen to Comrade Trotsky:

> Every time after I visited headquarters, I used to say to Vladimir Ilyich: "Without qualified and experienced military men, we shall not be able to get out of this chaos."
>
> "This apparently is true. If they only do not betray us."
>
> "Let us assign a commissar to each of them."
>
> "Still better, two," said Lenin, "and let them have a firm grip at that. It cannot be that we do not have Communists with a firm grip."
>
> That is the way the Supreme Military Council came to be constructed.

That is how Trotsky writes history.

What need did Comrade Trotsky have of these Arabian-Night tales, which discredit Lenin? Can it be for the purpose of exalting Lenin, the leader of the Party? Somehow, it does not look like it.

The Party knows Lenin as the greatest Marxist of our time,

a profound theoretician and most experienced revolutionary, devoid of even a scintilla of Blanquism. Comrade Trotsky in his book deals with this aspect of the case also. But from his characterization we get not Lenin the giant, but some Blanquist dwarf, who advises the Party in the October days "to seize power with their own hands, independent of the soviet and behind its back." I have already stated that this characterization is not one iota in keeping with the facts.

What need had Comrade Trotsky for this crying . . . inexactitude? Is this not an attempt to uncrown Lenin "just a trifle"?

Such are the typical characteristic traits of the new Trotskyism.

Wherein lies the danger of the new Trotskyism? In that Trotskyism, according to its entire inner content, has every chance of becoming the centre and the rallying point of non-proletarian elements which are trying to weaken, to disintegrate the dictatorship of the proletariat.

You will ask: what next? What are the immediate tasks of the Party in connection with the new literary contributions of Comrade Trotsky?

Trotskyism now comes forward in order to uncrown Bolshevism, to undermine its foundations. It is the task of the Party *to bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend.*

There is talk about measures of repression against the opposition and of the possibility of a split. This is all nonsense, comrades. Our Party is strong and powerful. It will not allow any splits. As for repressions, I am decidedly opposed to them. What we want now is not repressions, but a broadly conceived ideological struggle against recrudescent Trotskyism.

We did not want and did not pick this literary discussion. Trotskyism forces it on us by its anti-Leninist actions. Well and good, comrades, we are ready.

Pravda, No. 269, November 26, 1924.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS

(Preface to the book entitled: ON THE WAY TO OCTOBER)

I. THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SETTING FOR THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

THREE factors, external in nature, account for the comparative ease with which the proletarian revolution in Russia succeeded in breaking the chains of imperialism and thus overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

First: the factor that the October Revolution began in a period of desperate struggle between the two principal imperialist groups, the Anglo-French and the Austro-German, at a time when, engaged in a life-and-death struggle, these two groups had neither the time nor the means to devote serious attention to the struggle against the October Revolution. This factor was of the utmost importance for the October Revolution, which was thereby enabled to take advantage of the fierce clash within the imperialist world to strengthen and organize its own forces.

Second: the factor that the October Revolution began during the imperialist World War, at a time when the toiling masses, tormented by the war and thirsting for peace, were by the very logic of events being led to the proletarian revolution as the only way to escape from the war. This factor was of extreme importance to the October Revolution, since it put into its hands the mighty weapon of peace, made it easy for it to connect the Soviet revolution with the ending of the hated war and thus created mass sympathy for it both in the West among the workers and in the East among the oppressed peoples.

Third: The powerful working class movement in Europe and the maturing of a revolutionary crisis in the West and in the East

called forth by the long drawn out imperialist war. This factor was of inestimable importance for the revolution in Russia, since it assured it of reliable allies outside Russia for the latter's struggle against world imperialism.

But, besides factors of an external nature, the October Revolution possessed also quite a number of internal favourable factors which facilitated its victory.

The following conditions must be regarded as the principal ones:

First, the October Revolution enjoyed the most active support of the overwhelming majority of the working class in Russia.

Second, it enjoyed the undoubted support of the poor peasants and the majority of the soldiers, who were thirsting for peace and land.

Third, it had at its head as its guiding force so tried and tested a party as the Bolshevik Party, strong not only in its experience and years of discipline, but also by reason of its manifold and close connections with the toiling masses.

Fourth, the October Revolution had to face enemies who were comparatively easy to overcome, such as the more or less feeble Russian bourgeoisie, the landlord class, which was quite demoralized by the peasant "revolts," and the compromising parties (the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), which had become completely bankrupt politically during the war.

Fifth, the revolution had at its disposal the extensive area of the young state, in which it was able to manoeuvre freely, retreat when circumstances so required, rest, gather strength, etc.

Sixth, in its struggle against counter-revolution the October Revolution could count upon sufficient resources of food, fuel and raw materials within the country.

The combination of the above external and internal factors created that special situation which determined the comparative ease with which the October Revolution won its victory.

This does not mean, of course, that the October Revolution had no unfavourable factors as far as its external and internal setting was concerned. How shall we appraise, for example, such an unfavourable factor as the well-known isolation of the Octo-

ber Revolution, the absence alongside it, and in its neighbourhood, of a Soviet country on which it could rely for support? Beyond a doubt, the future revolution, for example in Germany, should prove to be in a much more favourable situation in this respect, because it has in close proximity so powerful a Soviet country as our Soviet Union. This is quite apart from so unfavourable a factor for the October Revolution as the absence of a proletarian majority within the country.

But these negative factors merely emphasize the tremendous importance of the peculiarity of the external and internal conditions of the October Revolution of which we have spoken above.

This peculiarity must not be lost sight of for a single moment. It must be kept firmly in mind especially in analysing the German events of the autumn of 1923. Above all, Comrade Trotsky must keep it in mind, since he draws a wholesale analogy between the October Revolution and the revolution in Germany and scourges the German Communist Party without restraint for its actual and alleged mistakes.

It was easy for Russia—says Lenin—in the concrete, historically quite unique situation of 1917, to *begin* a socialist revolution; whereas to *continue* it and complete it will be more difficult for Russia than for European countries. Even at the beginning of 1918 I had to point to this circumstance, and since then the experience of two years entirely corroborates the correctness of this argument. Specific conditions like: 1) the possibility of connecting the Soviet revolution with the conclusion, thanks to it, of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible extent; 2) the possibility of making use, for a certain time, of the deadly struggle between two world-powerful groups of imperialist plunderers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; 3) the possibility of enduring a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly because of the gigantic dimensions of the country and the bad means of communication; 4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the proletarian party borrowed the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the majority of whom were sharply hostile to Bolshevism) and at once achieved these demands through conquest of political power by the proletariat—such specific conditions do not exist now in Western Europe and a repetition of similar conditions is not too easy. That is why, *inter alia*—apart from a number of other causes—it will be more difficult to *begin* the socialist revolution in Western Europe than it was for us. *(Cf. "Left Wing" Communism.)*

These words of Lenin's must not be forgotten.

II. Two Special Features of the October Revolution—or October and Comrade Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution

There are two special features of the October Revolution which must be understood first of all, if the inner sense and historical significance of that revolution are to be grasped.

What are these special features?

The first of them is the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat was born in our country as a power which came into existence on the basis of an alliance between the proletariat and the toiling masses of the peasantry, the latter being led by the proletariat. The second is the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat entrenched itself in our country as the result of the victory of socialism in a single country with a poorly developed capitalism, and with capitalism preserved in other countries more highly developed in the capitalist sense. This does not mean, of course, that there are no other special features of the October Revolution. But it is these two particular features that are important for us as the given moment, not only because they reveal clearly the quintessence of the October Revolution, but also because they fully expose the opportunist nature of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Let us briefly examine these peculiarities.

The problem of the toiling masses of the petty bourgeoisie, both urban and rural, the problem of winning over these masses to the side of the proletariat, is of very great importance for the proletarian revolution. On the question of whom the toiling people of town and country will support in the struggle for power, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat, of whose reserves they will become, the reserves of the bourgeoisie or the reserves of the proletariat—on this depends the fate of the revolution and the stability of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The revolutions in France in 1848 and 1871 were crushed chiefly because the peasant reserves turned out to be on the side of the bourgeoisie. The October Revolution was victorious because it succeeded in depriving the bourgeoisie of its peasant reserves, because it was able to win over these reserves to the side of the

proletariat, because in that revolution the proletariat proved to be the only guiding force for the millions of toiling masses in town and country.

Anyone who has not grasped this will never comprehend the nature of the October Revolution, nor the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor the peculiarities of the internal policy of our proletarian power.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not simply the upper stratum of the government "cleverly" "selected" by the careful hand of an "experienced strategist," and "sensibly relying" on the support of one section or another of the population. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a class alliance between the proletariat and the toiling masses of the peasantry, for the purpose of overthrowing capital, for bringing about the final victory of socialism, an alliance based on the condition that its leading force is the proletariat.

Thus, this is not a question of slightly underestimating or of slightly overestimating the revolutionary possibilites of the peasant movement, as certain diplomatic defenders of "permanent revolution" are now fond of expressing it. The question is one of the nature of the new proletarian state which came into being as a result of the October Revolution. The question is one of the character of proletarian rule, of the very foundations of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The dictatorship of the proletariat—says Lenin—is a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the toilers, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of toilers (the petty bourgeoisie, the small masters, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these; it is an alliance against capital, an alliance aiming at the complete overthrow of capital, at the complete suppression of the resistance of the bourgeoisie and of any attempt on their part at restoration, an alliance aiming at the final establishment and consolidation of socialism. *(Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XXIV, Introduction to the Speech: "On Deceiving the People with Slogans," part V.)

And further on:

The dictatorship of the proletariat, if we translate this Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical expression into more simple language, means just this: only one definite class, namely the urban workers, and the industrial workers generally, is capable of leading the whole mass of toiling and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capitalism, in the course of this overthrow, in the struggle to maintain and entrench its

victory, in the work of creating a new, socialist social system, in the whole struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV, "The Great Initiative.")

Such is the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as given by Lenin.

One of the special features of the October Revolution is the fact that this revolution represents the classic realization of the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Certain comrades assume that this theory is a purely "Russian" theory and applies only to Russian realities. That is wrong. That is absolutely wrong. In speaking of the toiling masses of the non-proletarian classes, which are led by the proletariat, Lenin has in mind not only the Russian peasants, but also the labouring elements of the borderlands of the Soviet Union, which until recently were the colonies of Russia. Lenin asserted over and over again that without its alliance with these masses of other nationalities the proletariat of Russia could not be victorious. In his articles on the national question and in his speeches at the Congresses of the Communist International Lenin more than once said that the victory of the world revolution was impossible without the revolutionary alliance, the revolutionary *bloc*, between the proletariat of the advanced countries and the oppressed peoples of the enslaved colonies. But what are colonies if not the oppressed and toiling masses, and first of all the toiling masses of the peasantry? Who does not know that the question of emancipating the colonies is *essentially* a question of emancipating the toiling masses of the non-proletarian classes from the oppression and exploitation of finance capital?

But from this it follows that the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not purely a "Russian" theory, but a theory which is binding for all countries. Bolshevism is not simply a Russian phenomenon. "Bolshevism," says Lenin, "can serve as a model of tactics for all." (*Cf. Lenin, Collected Works*. Russian edition, Vol. XXIII, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," Chap. VII, p. 106.)

Such are the characteristic features of the first peculiarity of the October Revolution.

How do matters stand with regard to Comrade Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution," bearing in mind this peculiarity of the October Revolution.

We shall not linger over Comrade Trotsky's position in 1905, when he "simply" forgot all about the peasantry as a revolutionary force, and put forward the slogan of "no tsar but a workers' government," that is, the slogan of revolution without the peasantry. Even Comrade Radek, that diplomatic advocate of "permanent revolution," is now obliged to admit that "permanent revolution" in 1905 meant a "leap in the air from reality." (*Cf. Pravda* of December 14, 1924.) Now, apparently, everyone admits that it is not worth fussing any more over this "leap in the air."

Nor shall we linger over Comrade Trotsky's position in the period of the war, say, in 1915, when in his article *The Struggle for Power*, taking as his starting point the fact that "we are living in the epoch of imperialism," that imperialism "aligns not the bourgeois nation against the old regime, but the proletariat against the bourgeois nation," he came to the conclusion that the revolutionary role of the peasantry was bound to decline, that the slogan of the confiscation of the land no longer had the same importance as formerly. (*Cf. The Year 1905*, Russian edition, pp. 289-92.) It is well known that Lenin, in criticising this article of Comrade Trotsky's at that time, accused him of "denying" "the role of the peasantry," and said that "Trotsky is really helping the liberal labour politicians in Russia who interpret 'denying' the role of the peasantry to mean unwillingness to rouse the peasantry to revolution." (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, "Two Lines of the Revolution," Vol. XVIII, p. 318.)

Rather let us pass on to the later works of Comrade Trotsky on this subject, to the works belonging to the period when the proletarian dictatorship had already succeeded in establishing itself and when Comrade Trotsky had had the opportunity to test his theory of "permanent revolution" in the light of actual events and to correct his errors. Let us take the "Preface" to Comrade Trotsky's book *The Year 1905*, written in 1922. This is what

Trotsky says in this "Preface" concerning "permanent revolution":

> It was during the interval between January 9 and the general strike of October 1905 that the views on the character of the revolutionary development of Russia, which came to be known as the theory of the "permanent revolution" gradually crystallised in the author's mind. This somewhat complicated term represented a rather simple idea; though the immediate objectives of the Russian Revolution were bourgeois in nature, the revolution, upon achieving its objectives, would not stop there. The revolution would not be able to solve its immediate bourgeois problems except by placing the proletariat in power. And the latter, upon assuming power, would not be able to limit itself to the bourgeois framework of the revolution. On the contrary, precisely in order to secure its victory the proletarian vanguard would be forced in the very early stages of its rule to make deep inroads not only into feudal property but into capitalist property as well. In this the proletariat will come into *hostile collision* not only with the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of revolutionary struggle, *but also with the broad masses of the peasants* who were instrumental in bringing it into power. The contradictions in the situation of the workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelming majority of peasants can be solved only on an international scale, on the arena of the world proletarian revolution.* (*Cf.* the above-mentioned "Preface" to Comrade Trotsky's book *The Year 1905.*)

This is how Comrade Trotsky speaks of his "permanent revolution."

One has only to compare this quotation with the quotations given above from Lenin's works on the dictatorship of the proletariat to perceive the great chasm which divides the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat from Comrade Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution."

Lenin speaks of the *alliance* of the proletariat and the toiling strata of the peasantry as the foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In Trotsky we find the "*hostile collision*" "of the proletarian vanguard" with "the broad masses of the peasants."

Lenin speaks of the *leadership* of the toiling and exploited masses by the proletariat. In Trotsky we find "*contradictions* in the situation of the workers' government in a backward country, with an overwhelming majority of peasants."

According to Lenin, the revolution draws its forces chiefly from among the workers and peasants of Russia itself. According

* My italics.—*J. S.*

to Trotsky, the necessary forces can be found *only* "on the arena of the world proletarian revolution."

But what is to happen if the world revolution is fated to arrive with some delay? Is there any ray of hope for our revolution? Comrade Trotsky does not admit any ray of hope, for the "contradictions in the situation of the workers' government . . . can be solved *only* . . . on the arena of the world proletarian revolution." According to this there is but one prospect left for our revolution: to vegetate in its own contradictions and decay to its roots while waiting for the world revolution.

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat, according to Lenin?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is the power which relies on the alliance between the proletariat and the toiling masses of the peasantry for "the complete overthrow of capital" and "the final establishment and consolidation of socialism."

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Trotsky?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which enters "into hostile collision . . . with the broad masses of the peasants" and seeks the solution of its "contradictions" *merely* "on the arena of the world proletarian revolution."

In what respect does this "theory of the permanent revolution" differ from the well-known theory of menshevism which repudiates the concept: dictatorship of the proletariat?

In substance there is no difference.

There can be no doubt about it. "Permanent revolution" is not a mere underestimation of the revolutionary possibilities inherent in the peasant movement. "Permanent revolution" is an underestimation of the peasant movement which leads to the *rejection* of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Comrade Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is another variety of menshevism.

This is the way matters stand with the first special feature of the October Revolution.

What are the characteristics of the second special feature of the October Revolution?

In studying imperialism, especially in the period of the war, Lenin arrived at the law of the unevenness, of the spasmodic character of the economic and political development of the capitalist countries. According to this law, the development of enterprises, trusts, branches of industry and of separate countries proceeds, not evenly, not according to an established order of succession, not in such a way that one trust, one branch of industry or one country continually proceeds in advance of the others, while other trusts or countries lag behind one another, but spasmodically, with interruptions in the development of some countries and leaps ahead in the development of others. Under these conditions the "quite legitimate" ambition of the countries that are lagging behind to preserve their old positions and the equally "legitimate" ambition of the countries that have leapt forward to seize new positions leads to a situation in which armed clashes among the imperialist countries are an inevitable necessity. Such was the case, for example, with Germany which, half a century ago, in comparison with France and England, represented a backward country. The same must be said of Japan, in comparison with Russia. It is a well-known fact, however, that by the beginning of the twentieth century Germany and Japan had leaped so far ahead that the first had succeeded in overtaking France and had begun to press England hard on the world market, while Japan was overtaking Russia. From these contradictions arose, as is well known, the recent imperialist war.

This law proceeds from the following:

1) "Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the people of the world by a handful of 'advanced' countries." (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX—Preface to French edition of *Imperialism;* also *Little Lenin Library.*)

2) "And this 'booty' is shared between two or three powerful world pirates armed to the teeth (America, Great Britain. Japan) who involve the whole world in *their* war over the sharing of *their* booty." (*Cf. ibid.*)

3) The growth of contradictions within the world system of

financial oppression and the inevitability of armed clashes make the world front of imperialism vulnerable to revolution and make the piercing of this front by certain countries probable.

4) This breach is more likely to occur at such points, and in such countries, in which the chain of the imperialist front is weakest, that is to say, in which imperialism is least equipped and where it is easier for revolution to develop.

5) In view of this, the victory of socialism in one country, even if this country is capitalistically less developed—while capitalism is preserved in other countries—even if these countries are more highly developed capitalistically, is quite possible and probable.

Such are in brief the foundations of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

What is the second special feature of the October Revolution?

The second special feature of the October Revolution is that this revolution represents a model of the application in practice of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

He who has not understood this special feature of the October Revolution can never comprehend either the international nature of this revolution, its colossal international force, or its peculiar international policy.

"Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in a few or even in one single capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized its own socialist production, would rise against the rest of the capitalist world, attract to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, raise revolts among them against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity, come out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." For, "the free federation of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states." (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, "The United States of Europe Slogan.")

The opportunists of all countries assert that the proletarian revolution may begin—if it is to begin anywhere at all, according to their theory—only in industrially developed countries and that the more highly developed these countries are industrially, the more chances there are for the victory of socialism. The possibility of the victory of socialism in a single country, particul-

arly in a country poorly developed in a capitalist sense, is excluded by them as something absolutely improbable. Even during the war, Lenin, on the basis of the law of the uneven development of the imperialist states, opposed to the opportunists his own theory of the proletarian revolution, of the victory of socialism in a single country, even if that country has been less developed in the capitalist sense.

It is well known that the October Revolution fully confirmed the correctness of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

How do matters stand with Comrade Trotsky's "permanent revolution," from the viewpoint of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution?

Let us take Comrade Trotsky's *Our Revolution* (1906). Comrade Trotsky writes:

> Without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia cannot maintain itself in power and transform its temporary rule into a durable socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant. *(Cf. Our Revolution.)*

What does this quotation say? It says that the victory of socialism in a single country, in this case Russia, is impossible "*without* direct state support from the European proletariat"; *i.e.*, before the European proletariat has conquered power.

What is there in common between this "theory" and Lenin's formula about the possibility of the victory of socialism "in one single capitalist country?"

It is evident that there is nothing in common.

But let us admit that Comrade Trotsky's pamphlet which was published in 1906, at a time when it was difficult to determine the character of our revolution, contains some inadvertent errors and does not fully correspond to Comrade Trotsky's views at a later period. Let us examine another pamphlet written by Comrade Trotsky, his *Program of Peace*, which made its appearance before the October Revolution of 1917 and has now (1924) been reprinted in his book *1917*. In this pamphlet Comrade Trotsky criticises the Leninist theory of the proletarian revolution as regards the victory of socialism in one country, and opposes to it the slogan of the United States of Europe. He asserts that the

victory of socialism in one country is impossible, that the victory of socialism is possible either as a victory in several principal states of Europe (England, Russia, Germany), united into the United States of Europe, or else it is quite impossible. He declares out and out that "a victorious revolution in Russia, or in England, is unthinkable without a revolution in Germany, and *vice versa.*" (*Cf.* Trotsky, *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Vol. III, "The Year 1917," Part I, page 89.)

"The only more or less concrete historical consideration," says Comrade Trotsky, "put forward against the slogan of the United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss *Sozial-Demokrat*" (at that time the organ of the Bolsheviks—*J. S.*) "in the sentence which follows: 'Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.' From this the *Sozial-Demokrat* drew the conclusion that the victory of socialism was possible in a single country, and that, therefore, there was no point in making the creation of a United States of Europe the condition for the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country. That capitalist development in different countries is uneven is an absolutely incontrovertible fact. But this very unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist level of England, Austria, Germany or France is not identical. But in comparison with Africa and Asia all these countries represent capitalist 'Europe,' which has grown ripe for the social revolution. That no single country should 'wait' for others in its own struggle is an elementary idea which it is useful and necessary to repeat, in order to avoid the substitution of the idea of expectant international inaction for the idea of simultaneous international action. Without waiting for others, we begin and continue our struggle on our national soil quite sure that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if that should not happen, then it would be hopeless, in the light of the experience of history and in the light of theoretical considerations, to think, for example, that a revolutionary Russia could hold its own in the face of conservative Europe or that a socialist Germany could remain isolated in the capitalist world." (*Cf.* Trotsky, *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Volume III, Part I, pp. 89-90.)

As you see, we have before us that same theory of the simultaneous victory of socialism in the principal countries of Europe, which, as a rule, excludes the Leninist theory of revolution, about the victory of socialism in one country.

Of course, for the *complete* victory of socialism, for *complete* security against the restoration of the old order, the united efforts of the proletarians of several countries are necessary. Of course, without the support given to our revolution by the proletariat of Europe, the proletariat of Russia could not have held its own against the general pressure, just as without the support the revo-

lution in Russia gave to the revolutionary movement in the West, the latter could not have developed at the pace at which it has begun to develop since the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. Of course we need support. But what is meant by the support of our revolution by the West European proletariat? The sympathy of European workers for our revolution, their readiness to thwart the imperialists' plans of intervention—is not all that support; is that not real assistance? Of course it is. Without such support, without such assistance not only from the European workers but also from the colonial and dependent countries, the proletarian dictatorship in Russia would have been in a tight corner. Has this sympathy and this assistance, coupled with the power of our Red Army and the readiness of the workers and peasants of Russia to defend their socialist fatherland to the last gasp, has all this been sufficient to beat off the attacks of the imperialists and win for ourselves the necessary conditions for the serious work of construction? Yes, it has been sufficient. Is this sympathy growing stronger, or ebbing away? Beyond question, it is growing stronger. Hence, have we got favourable conditions not only to push on with the organization of socialist economy, but also in our turn to give support to the West European workers as well as to the oppressed peoples of the East? Certainly we have. This is eloquently proved by the seven years' history of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. Can it be denied that a mighty wave of labour enthusiasm has already arisen in our country? No, this cannot be denied.

After all this, of what significance is Comrade Trotsky's assertion that revolutionary Russia could not hold its own against conservative Europe?

It can have only this significance: first, Comrade Trotsky does not appreciate the inherent strength of our revolution; secondly, Comrade Trotsky does not comprehend the inestimable importance of the moral support which is given to our revolution by the workers of the West and the peasants of the East; thirdly, Comrade Trotsky does not perceive the internal weakness which is corroding imperialism in our day.

Wholly absorbed in the criticism of the Leninist theory of the

proletarian revolution, Comrade Trotsky has unwittingly defeated his own arguments in his pamphlet *A Program of Peace*, which appeared in 1917 and was republished in 1924.

But perhaps this pamphlet too has become out-of-date and has ceased for some reason or other to correspond to Comrade Trotsky's present views? Let us take the latest works of Comrade Trotsky, written after the victory of the proletarian revolution in one *single country*, in Russia. Let us take, for example, Comrade Trotsky's *Postscript* to the new edition of his pamphlet, *A Program of Peace*, which was written in 1922. Here is what he writes in this *Postscript:*

The assertion, repeated several times in *A Program of Peace*, that the proletarian revolution cannot be carried through to a victorious conclusion within the boundaries of one country may appear to some readers to be refuted by almost five years' experience of our Soviet republic. But such a conclusion would be groundless. The fact that the workers' state has maintained itself against the whole world in a single country, and in a backward country at that, bears witness to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other countries more advanced, more civilized, will be capable of performing real wonders. But, although we have held our ground in the political and military sense as a state, we have not yet set to work to create a socialist society and have not even approached this stage. So long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries, we are compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to seek for agreements with the capitalist world; at the same time one may say with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to cure some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but that genuine advance in the construction of socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory** of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe. (*Cf.* Trotsky, *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Volume III, Part I, pp. 92-93.)

Thus speaks Comrade Trotsky, plainly sinning against reality and stubbornly trying to save his "permanent revolution" from final shipwreck.

It would appear that, no matter how one turns and twists, we have not only not "set to work" to create socialist society, but we have "not even approached this stage." It seems that some people were hoping for "agreements with the capitalist world," but it turns out nothing will come of these agreements, for no matter how we turn and twist, we will not make any "genuine advance in the construction of socialist economy," until the

* My italics.—*J. S.*

proletariat has been victorious in the "most important countries of Europe."

Then, as there is still no victory in the West, the only "choice" that remains for the revolution in Russia is: either rot to the root, or degenerate into a bourgeois government.

It is not for nothing that Comrade Trotsky has been talking for some two years about the "degeneration" of our Party.

It is not for nothing that last year Comrade Trotsky predicted the "doom" of our country.

How can this strange "theory" be brought into harmony with the Leninist theory of the "victory of socialism in one country"?

How can this strange "prospect" be brought into harmony with Lenin's view that the New Economic Policy would enable us "to lay the foundation of socialist economy"?

How can this "permanent" hopelessness be harmonized, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

> At the present time socialism has already ceased to be a question of the remote future, it has ceased to be some abstract picture, an icon. As regards icons we still hold our old opinion, and that is a bad opinion. We have dragged socialism into day-to-day life and it is there that we must define our position. That is the task of our times, the task of our epoch. Permit me to close with an expression of my assurance that no matter how difficult this task may be, no matter how new it may be in comparison with our previous tasks, and no matter how many difficulties it confronts us with, we shall all of us together—not tomorrow, but within a few years—perform this task at all costs, so that out of N.E.P. Russia will come socialist Russia. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Vol. XXVII, Speech at the Plenum of the Moscow Soviet.)

How is this "permanent" hopelessness to be harmonized, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

> As a matter of fact, the power of state over all large-scale means of production, the power of state in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc.—*is not this all that is necessary in order to build complete socialist society* from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly treated as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to treat as such now, during N.E.P.? This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for this building. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVI, "On Co-operation.")

It is plain that it does not harmonize and cannot be harmonized. Comrade Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is the negation of

the Leninist theory of the proletarian revolution, and *vice versa*, the Leninist theory of proletarian revolution is the negation of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Distrust in the strength and capacity of our revolution, distrust in the strength and capacities of the Russian proletariat forms the basis of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Hitherto only *one* side of the theory of "permanent revolution" has commonly been noted—lack of faith in the revolutionary possibilities inherent in the peasant movement. Now, in fairness this side must be supplemented by *another* side—lack of faith in the strength and capacities of the proletariat in Russia.

In what way does Comrade Trotsky's theory differ from the ordinary Menshevik theory that the victory of socialism in one country, especially in a backward one, is impossible without the preliminary victory of the proletarian revolution "in the principal countries of Western Europe"?

In essence, it does not differ in the least.

There can be no doubt at all. The theory of "permanent revolution" advanced by Comrade Trotsky is but another variety of menshevism.

Of late, rotten diplomats have begun to breed in our press. who are trying to drag in the theory of "permanent revolution" as something compatible with Leninism. Of course, say they, this theory proved to be worthless in 1905. But the mistake Comrade Trotsky made was that he spurted ahead and tried to apply to the 1905 situation what could not then be applied. But later, say they, for example, in October 1917, when the revolution had had time to mature completely, Comrade Trotsky's theory proved to be quite in place. It is not difficult to guess that the chief of these diplomats is Comrade Radek. Wouldn't you like to hear him:

> The war drove a wedge between the peasantry, which was striving to win land and peace, and the petty-bourgeois parties; the war placed the peasantry under the leadership of the working class and of its vanguard, the Bolshevik Party. This rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and of the peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class, relying on the peasantry. What Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky advanced against Lenin in 1905 [*i.e.*, "permanent revolution"—*J. S.*] proved,

as a matter of fact, to be the second stage of our historical development. (*Cf. Pravda*, No. 42, February 21, 1924.)

This is juggling with words.

It is not true that the war "rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and of the peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class, relying on the peasantry." In actual fact, the February Revolution of 1917 was the materialization of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry peculiarly interwoven with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

It is not true that the theory of "permanent revolution," which Comrade Radek modestly passes over in silence, was advanced in 1905 by Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky. As a matter of fact, this theory was advanced by Parvus and Trotsky. At the present time, after ten months, Comrade Radek corrects himself and thinks it necessary to hurl abuse at Parvus for inventing "permanent revolution." (*Cf.* his article in *Pravda* on Parvus.) But justice demands that Comrade Radek should also hurl abuse at Parvus's partner, Trotsky.

It is not true that "permanent revolution," which was discredited by the 1905 Revolution, proved to be correct in the "second stage of our historical development," that is, in the October Revolution. The whole course of the October Revolution, its whole development, has demonstrated and proved the complete bankruptcy of the theory of "permanent revolution" and its absolute incompatibility with the principles of Leninism.

Honeyed speeches and rotten diplomacy cannot hide the yawning chasm which lies between the theory of "permanent revolution" and Leninism.

III. Certain Special Features of the Tactics of the Bolsheviks During the Period of Preparation for October

In order to understand the tactics pursued by the Bolsheviks during the period of preparation for October, we must get a clear idea of certain of the particularly important special features of those tactics. This is all the more necessary, since in numerous pamphlets devoted to the tactics of the Bolsheviks precisely these features are frequently overlooked.

What are these features?

The First Feature: If we are to listen to Comrade Trotsky, there were only two periods in the history of the preparation for October; the period of reconnaissance and the period of uprising, and that all else comes from the evil one. What was the April demonstration of 1917? "The April demonstration, which went more to the Left than was intended, was a reconnoitring sortie for the purpose of testing the frame of mind of the masses and the relations between them and the majority in the soviets." (*Cf.* Trotsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII.) And what was the July demonstration of 1917? In the opinion of Comrade Trotsky, "in fact, in this case too, it was another, more extensive reconnaissance at a new and higher phase of the movement." *(Ibid.)* It need hardly be said that the June demonstration of 1917, which was organized at the demand of our Party, must, according to Comrade Trotsky, all the more be regarded as a "reconnaissance."

From this, presumably, it must be inferred that as early as March 1917, the Bolsheviks had a political army of workers and peasants at their disposal, and that if this army were not brought into action by them for the uprising in April or in June or in July, and was engaged merely in "reconnaissances," it was because, and only because, the "information obtained from the reconnaissances" was not favourable.

It need hardly be said that this vulgarized presentation of the political tactics of our Party represents nothing but a confusion of ordinary military tactics with the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks.

As a matter of fact, all these demonstrations represented, first and foremost, the effect of the elemental pressure of the masses, the effect of the indignation of the masses against the war, indignation that was seeking an outlet in the streets.

In actual fact, the role of the Party at that time was to give form to the mass demonstrations which arose with elemental and spontaneous force, and to lead them along the line of the revolutionary slogans of the Bolsheviks.

In actual fact, in March 1917, there was not and could not be a ready-made political army. The Bolsheviks were merely

creating an army of that sort (and did finally create it by October 1917) in the course of the struggle and conflicts of classes between April and October 1917. They were creating it both through the April demonstration, and the June and July demonstrations, and through the elections to the ward and municipal Dumas, and through the struggle against the Kornilov *putsch*, and by means of winning over the soviets. A political army is not the same thing as a military army. While a military command begins a war with an army ready at its hand, the Party has to create its army in the course of the struggle itself, in the course of the collisions between different classes, as fast as the masses themselves become convinced by their own experience that the slogans of the Party, the policy of the Party, are right.

Of course, every such demonstration threw a certain amount of light on the interrelation of forces involved, which were hidden from the eye; there was a certain amount of reconnoitring, but this reconnoitring was not the motive for the demonstration but its natural consequence.

In analysing the events leading up to the insurrection in October and comparing them with the events from April to July, Lenin says:

> The question is not the same as it was before April 20-21, June 9, July 3, for then there was a *spontaneous excitement* which we, as a party, either failed to comprehend (April 20) or held back and shaped into a peaceful demonstration (June 9 and July 3). For we knew very well at that time that the soviets were *not yet* ours, that the peasants *still* trusted the Lieber-Dan-Chernov course and not the Bolshevik course (uprising), that consequently we could not have back of us the majority of the people, and that consequently the uprising was premature. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Book II, "Letter to Comrades.")

It is plain that "reconnoitring" alone does not take us very far.

The root of the matter, evidently, lay not in "reconnoitring," but in the following:

1) During the entire period of preparation for October the Party constantly relied in its struggle upon the spontaneous upward swing of the revolutionary movement of the masses;

2) While relying on the spontaneous upward swing, it kept in its own hands the undivided leadership of the movement;

3) Such leadership of the movement made it easier for the Party to form the mass political army for the October insurrection;

4) Such a policy was bound to lead to the entire preparation for October proceeding under the leadership of a *single* Party, the Party of the Bolsheviks;

5) Such preparations for October, in their turn, led as a result of the October insurrection, to power being in the hands of *one* party, the Bolshevik Party.

Thus the undivided leadership of *one* party, the Communist Party, as the fundamental factor of the preparations for October —such is the characteristic feature of the October Revolution, such was the first special feature in the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

It is hardly necessary to prove that without this special feature in the tactics of the Bolsheviks, the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of imperialism would have been impossible.

In this the October Revolution is favourably distinguished from the 1871 revolution in France, where the leadership of the revolution was divided between two parties, neither of which could be called a communist party.

The Second Feature: The preparations for October thus proceeded under the leadership of a single party, the Bolshevik Party. But how did the Party exercise this leadership, along what line did it proceed? This leadership proceeded along the line of isolating the *compromising* parties as the most dangerous groupings in the period in which the revolution was coming to a head—along the line of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks.

What is the fundamental strategic rule of Leninism?

It is the recognition of the following:

1) The *compromising* parties are the most dangerous social support of the enemies of the revolution in the period in which the revolutionary climax is approaching;

2) The overthrow of the enemy (tsarism or the bourgeoisie) is impossible without the isolation of these parties;

3) The main attack in the period of preparation for the revolution must therefore be directed towards isolating these parties, towards detaching the broad masses of toilers from them.

In the period of the struggle against tsarism, in the period of preparation for the bourgeois-democratic revolution (1905-1916) the most dangerous social support of tsarism was the liberal monarchist party, the Cadet Party. Why? Because it was a compromising party, a party of *compromise* between tsarism and the majority of the people, that is, the peasantry as a whole. It was natural for the Party at that time to direct its main blows against the Cadets, for, without isolating the Cadets, it was impossible to count on a *rupture* between the peasantry and tsarism, and without securing this rupture, the success of the revolution was not to be expected. At that time many people did not understand this peculiarity of bolshevik strategy and accused the Bolsheviks of excessive "Cadetophobia"; they asserted that as far as the Bolsheviks were concerned, the struggle against the Cadets "overshadowed" the struggle against the chief foe—tsarism. But these accusations were groundless and revealed a complete failure to understand bolshevik strategy. which required the isolation of the compromising party *in order* to facilitate and bring nearer the victory over the main foe.

It is hardly necessary to prove that without this strategy the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution would have been impossible.

In the period of preparation for October, the centre of gravity of the forces in conflict shifted to another plane. The tsar was gone. The Cadet Party had been transformed from a compromising force into the governing force, into the ruling force of imperialism. Now the fight was not between tsarism and the people, but between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In this period the most dangerous social support of imperialism was the petty-bourgeois democratic parties, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and the Menshevik Party. Why? Because these parties were then the compromising parties, the parties of *compromise* between imperialism and the toiling masses. It was natural for the main blow of the Bolsheviks to be directed at that time against

these parties, for without isolating these parties it was impossible to count on the *rupture* between the toiling masses and imperialism, and without making sure of this rupture the victory of the Soviet Revolution could not be expected. Many people at that time did not grasp this peculiarity of the bolshevik tactics and accused the Bolsheviks of displaying "excessive hatred" towards the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and of "forgetting" the main aim. But the entire period of preparation for October bears eloquent testimony to the fact that only by these tactics were the Bolsheviks able to secure the victory of the October Revolution.

The characteristic feature of this period is the increasing revolutionization of the toiling masses of the peasantry; their disappointment with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, their desertion from these parties and their turn towards and direct rallying around the proletariat as the only force that remains revolutionary to the end and is capable of bringing peace to the country. The history of this period is the history of the struggle between the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks on the one hand, and the Bolsheviks on the other, for winning the toiling masses of the peasantry, a struggle for the control of these masses. The fate of this struggle was decided by the period of the coalition government, the period of the Kerensky regime, by the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to confiscate the estates of the landlords, by the effort of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to continue the war, by the June offensive at the front, by the revival of the death penalty for soldiers and by the Kornilov mutiny. And this fate was decided entirely in favour of bolshevik strategy; for without the isolation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, the government of the imperialists could not have been overthrown, and without the overthrow of that government, it would have been impossible to break away from the war. The policy of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks proved to be the only correct policy.

Thus, the isolation of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Parties, as the main line in leading the preparations for

October, was the second feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks.

It is scarcely necessary to prove that without this feature in the tactics of the Bolsheviks, the alliance of the working class and the toiling masses of the peasantry would have been left hanging in the air.

It is characteristic that this special feature in the bolshevik tactics is not mentioned, or is barely mentioned, by Comrade Trotsky in his *Lessons of October.*

The Third Feature: The Party's leadership in the work of preparing for October was thus carried out along the line of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik Parties, along the line of detaching from them the broad masses of the workers and peasants. But how, concretely, did the Party carry into effect this policy of isolation, in what form, under what slogan? It was effected in the form of the revolutionary mass movement for the power of the soviets, under the slogan "All Power to the Soviets," by means of the struggle to convert the soviets from organs for mobilising the masses into organs of insurrection, into organs of power, into the apparatus of the new proletarian state power.

Why was it precisely the soviets that the Bolsheviks seized upon as the fundamental organizational lever, capable of facilitating the work of isolating the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, capable of advancing the cause of the proletarian revolution and destined to lead the millions of toiling masses to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

What are the soviets? In September 1917 Lenin said:

> The soviets are the new state apparatus, which, in the first place, represent that armed force of the workers and peasants, a force that is not divorced from the people as was the force of the old standing army, but is bound up with them as closely as possible. In a military sense, this force is incomparably more mighty than the former; in the revolutionary sense, it is second to none. Second, this apparatus represents a link with the masses, with the majority of the people, that is so intimate, so indissoluble, so readily verifiable and renewable, that nothing like it was even approached in the former state apparatus. Third, this apparatus, because it is elective and subject to recall in accordance with the will of the people without any bureaucratic formalities, is far more democratic than were the former ones. Fourth, it represents a firm connection with the most divers occupations, thus facilitating all sorts of most radical reforms

without any bureaucracy. Fifth, it represents a form of organization of the vanguard, *i.e.*, of the most class conscious, most energetic, most progressive section of the *oppressed* classes, of the workers and peasants, and is thus an apparatus whereby the vanguard of the oppressed classes can elevate, educate and lead in its train the *whole gigantic mass* of these classes which until now have stood absolutely outside all political life, outside history. Sixth, it makes it possible to combine the advantages of parliamentarism with the advantages of immediate and direct democracy, *i.e.*, to unite in the persons of elected representatives of the people both legislative and *executive* functions. Compared with bourgeois parliamentarism, this is a step forward in the development of democracy which has historical world significance. . . . Had not the popular creativeness of the revolutionary classes given rise to the soviets, the cause of the proletarian revolution in Russia would have been hopeless, for there is no doubt that with the old state apparatus the proletariat could not have retained power, while it is impossible to create a new apparatus all at once. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Book II, "Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?")

That is why the Bolsheviks seized upon the soviets as the fundamental organizational link, capable of facilitating the work of organizing the October Revolution and the creation of a new powerful apparatus for the proletarian state authority.

From the point of view of its internal development, the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" passed through two stages, the first up to the July defeat of the Bolsheviks, during the period of the diarchy, and the second after the defeat of the Kornilov mutiny.

During the first stage this slogan signified the rupture of the *bloc* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks with the Cadets, the formation of a Soviet government consisting of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks (for at that time the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks predominated in the soviets), the right of free agitation for the opposition (that is, for the Bolsheviks) and the free struggle of parties within the soviets, the assumption being that by means of such a struggle the Bolsheviks would succeed in capturing the soviets and changing the composition of the Soviet government in the course of the peaceful development of the revolution. Of course, this plan did not signify the dictatorship of the proletariat. But it undoubtedly facilitated the preparation of the conditions required for guaranteeing the dictatorship, for by putting the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries into power and forcing them to carry into effect their anti-revolutionary platform, it hastened the unmask-

ing of the true nature of these parties, hastened their isolation, their rupture with the masses. However, the July defeat of the Bolsheviks cut short this development, gave the upper hand to the counter-revolution of the Cadets and the militarists and threw the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks into the arms of the latter. This circumstance forced the Party temporarily to withdraw its slogan, "All Power to the Soviets," in order to advance it again when a fresh revolutionary upsurge occurred.

The suppression of the Kornilov mutiny marked the beginning of the second stage. The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" was again put forward. But by this time that slogan no longer signified the same thing as it did in the first stage. Its content had been radically changed. By this time the slogan meant a complete rupture with imperialism and the passing of power to the Bolsheviks, for the majority of soviets were already Bolshevik. Now the slogan meant that the revolution was directly approaching the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of insurrection. More than that, the slogan now signified the organization and fashioning of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a state.

The inestimable importance of the tactics of transforming the soviets into organs of state power lay in the fact that it detached millions of toilers from imperialism, in that it exposed the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik Parties as the tools of imperialism, and in the fact that it led the masses, by direct route, as it were, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Thus, the policy of transforming the soviets into organs of state power regarded as a very important condition for the isolation of the compromising parties and for securing the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat—such is the third feature in the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

The Fourth Feature: The picture would be incomplete if we did not deal with the question of why the Bolsheviks were able to convert their Party slogans into slogans for the broad masses, slogans which were driving the revolution forward, and why and how they succeeded in convincing not only the vanguard of the

correctness of their policy, and not only the majority of the working class, but also the majority of the people.

The fact is that for the victory of the revolution, if that revolution is really a people's revolution, which draws in the masses in their millions, it is not sufficient to have the Party slogans right. For the victory of the revolution one more condition is required, namely, that the masses themselves become convinced by their own experience of the correctness of those slogans. Only then do the slogans of the Party become the slogans of the masses themselves. Only then does the revolution really become a people's revolution. One of the special features of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October lies in their having correctly foreseen the paths and turnings which would naturally lead the masses up to the Party's slogans, to the very threshold of the revolution so to speak, thus making it easier for them to feel, to test, to realize by their own experience the correctness of these slogans. In other words, one of the special features in the tactics of the Bolsheviks lies in the fact that these tactics do not confuse the leadership of the Party with the leadership of the masses, in that they clearly envisage the difference between the first sort of leadership and the second sort of leadership, in that these tactics represent the science not only of leadership of the Party but of leadership of the millions of toiling masses.

A graphic example of this special feature in the Bolshevik tactics is provided by the events connected with the convening and dissolution of the Constituent Assembly.

It is well known that as early as April 1917, the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan of the Republic of Soviets. It is equally well known that the Constituent Assembly was a bourgeois parliament, fundamentally incompatible with the principles of the Republic of Soviets. How could the Bolsheviks, who were striving towards the Republic of Soviets, at the same time demand that the Provisional Government should immediately convene the Constituent Assembly? How is is that the Bolsheviks not only took part in the elections but even convened the Constituent Assembly themselves? How is it that a month before their insurrection, in

the transition from the old to the new, the Bolsheviks conceived the possibility of a temporary combination of the Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly?

This "happened" because:

1) The idea of a Constituent Assembly was one of the most popular ideas among the broad masses of the population.

2) The slogan of the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly made it easier to unmask the counter-revolutionary nature of the Provisional Government.

3) In order to discredit the idea of a Constituent Assembly in the eyes of the masses, the masses had to be brought up to the very gates, as it were, of the Constituent Assembly with their demands for land, for peace, for all power to the soviets, thus coming up against a real and living Constituent Assembly.

4) Only in this way could the masses be easily convinced by their own experience of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Constituent Assembly and of the necessity for dispersing it.

5) All this naturally presupposed the possibility of a temporary combination of the Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly as one of the means of eliminating the latter.

6) Such a combination, if carried through, and *provided* all power had been transferred to the soviets, could signify merely the subordination of the Constituent Assembly to the soviets, its conversion into an appendage of the soviets, its painless extinction.

It is scarcely necessary to prove that had the Bolsheviks not adopted such a policy the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly would not have taken place so smoothly, and the subsequent actions of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, with the slogan "All Power to the Constituent Assembly," would not have failed so signally.

We participated—says Lenin—in the elections to the Russian bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, in September-November 1917. Were our tactics right or not? . . . Had not we Russian Bolsheviks, in September-November 1917 *more* right than any Western Communist to consider that parliamentarism in Russia had become politically outworn? Undoubtedly we had, for the point is *not* whether bourgeois parliamentarism has existed for a long or short period, but to what extent the labouring masses are *prepared*, spiritually, politically and practically, to accept

the Soviet regime and to disperse (or allow to be dispersed) the bourgeois-democratic parliament. That in Russia, in September-November 1917, the working classes of the towns, the soldiers and the peasants, were, owing to a series of special circumstances, exceptionally well prepared for the acceptance of the Soviet regime and the dispersal of the most democratic bourgeois parliament, is a quite incontestable and fully established historical fact. However, the Bolsheviks did *not* boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections before *as well as after* the conquest of political power by the proletariat. (*Cf.* Lenin, "*Left Wing*" *Communism,* Chap. 7.)

Why then did they not boycott the Constituent Assembly? Because, says Lenin:

> Participation in bourgeois-democratic parliaments even a few weeks before the victory of the Soviet republic, and even after that victory, not only does not harm the revolutionary proletariat, but makes it easier to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments should be dispersed, *makes it easier* to disperse them, and *facilitates* the political extinction of bourgeois parliamentarism. *(Cf. ibid.)*

It is characteristic that Comrade Trotsky does not understand this special feature of bolshevik tactics when he sneers at the "theory" of combining the Constituent Assembly with the soviets, as Hilferdingism.

He does not understand that permitting such a combination—given the slogan of insurrection and the probable victory of the soviets—was the only revolutionary tactic that could be adopted in connection with the summoning of the Constituent Assembly and that it had nothing in common with the Hilferding tactic of converting the soviets into a mere appendage of the Constituent Assembly; he does not understand that the error committed by several comrades in *this* question does not give him any grounds for disparaging the absolutely correct position taken by Lenin and the Party concerning "combined governmental authority" *under* certain conditions. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XXI, Book II, "Letter to Comrades.")

He does not understand that if the Bolsheviks had not pursued this policy towards the Constituent Assembly, they would not have succeeded in winning over to their side the masses of the people; and if they had not won over these masses, they could not have transformed the October insurrection into a profound people's revolution.

It is interesting that Comrade Trotsky sneers even at the words "people," "revolutionary democracy," etc., which are to be met with in the articles of Bolsheviks, since he considers them indecent for a Marxist to use.

Comrade Trotsky evidently has forgotten that Lenin, this undoubted Marxist, even in September 1917, a month before the victory of the dictatorship, wrote of the "necessity of all power immediately passing into the hands of *revolutionary democracy headed by the revolutionary proletariat.*" (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Book I. "On the Road to Insurrection—Marxism and Uprising.")

Comrade Trotsky evidently has forgotten that Lenin, about whose Marxism there can be no doubt, in quoting the well-known letter of Marx to Kugelmann (April 1871), to the effect that the break-up of the bureaucratic, military governmental apparatus is a condition precedent for every true *people's* revolution on the Continent, writes in black and white the following lines:

> . . . particular attention should be given to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the military and bureaucratic apparatus of the state is "essential for every real *people's* revolution." This concept of a "people's" revolution seems strange on Marx's lips, and the Russian Plekhanovists and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be considered Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression of Marx to be a "slip of the tongue." They have reduced Marxism to such a state of poverty-stricken "liberal" distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the distinction between bourgeois and proletarian revolution—and even that distinction they understand in an entirely lifeless way. . . .
>
> In the Europe of 1871, the proletariat did not constitute a majority of the people in any country on the Continent. A "people's" revolution, actually sweeping the majority into the movement, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasantry. Both classes then constituted the "people." Both classes are united by the circumstance that the "bureaucratic and military state machine" oppresses, crushes, exploits them. To *shatter* this machine, to *break it up*—this is the true interest of the "people," of its majority, the workers and most of the peasants, this is the "preliminary condition" of a free union of the poorest peasantry with the proletarians; while without such a union democracy is unstable and socialist reorganization is impossible. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Book II, "State and Revolution," Chap. III, Part I.)

These words of Lenin should not be forgotten.

Thus, ability to convince the masses through their own experience that the Party slogans were right, by leading these masses

up to revolutionary positions, as a very important condition for winning over the millions of toilers to the side of the Party, is the fourth peculiarity in the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

I think that what I have said is sufficient to elucidate the characteristic features of these tactics.

IV. The October Revolution as the Beginning of and Premise for the World Revolution

There is no doubt that the universal theory of the simultaneous victory of revolution in the principal countries of Europe, the theory that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, has turned out to be an artificial and untenable theory. The seven years' history of the proletarian revolution in Russia speaks not for but against this theory. This theory is inacceptable not only as a scheme of development of the world revolution, for it is in contradiction to obvious facts. It is still less acceptable as a slogan, for it fetters rather than releases the initiative of different countries which, by force of certain historical conditions, are given the opportunity by their own efforts to break through the front of capital, for it does not stimulate an active attack on capital in separate countries, but inculcates passive waiting for the moment of the "universal climax"; for among the proletarians of the different countries it cultivates, not the spirit of revolutionary determination, but the mood of Hamletian doubt as to whether "the others will back us up." Lenin was absolutely right in saying that the victory of the proletariat in a single country forms a "typical case," that the "simultaneous revolution in a number of countries" can be only a "rare exception." (*Cf. Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, 1918.)

But, as is well known, Lenin's theory of revolution is not limited to this one side of the matter. It is at the same time a theory of the development of the world revolution.* The victory of socialism in one country is not a self-sufficient task. In the country where it is victorious the revolution must regard itself, not as a

* See "Foundations of Leninism" in my book *Leninism*, Vol. I.

self-sufficient quantity, but as a support, a means for hastening the victory of the proletariat in all countries. For the victory of the revolution in one single country, in this case Russia, is not only a product of the uneven development and progressive decay of imperialism. It constitutes at the same time the beginning and premise of the world revolution.

Beyond a doubt, the way of development of the world revolution is not so simple as it may once have seemed before the victory of socialism in one country, before the appearance of highly developed imperialism, which represents the "eve of the socialist revolution." For a new factor has arisen, *viz.*, the law of the uneven development of the capitalist countries, which operates under the conditions of developed imperialism and which connotes the inevitability of military collisions, of the general weakening of the world front of capital and of the possibility of the victory of socialism in separate countries. For a new factor has arisen, *viz.*, the huge Soviet country, lying between West and East, between the centre of financial exploitation of the world and the area of colonial oppression, a country which by its very existence is revolutionising the entire world.

All these are factors (I do not mention other less important factors) which cannot be left out of account in studying the path of development of the world revolution.

Formerly it was commonly thought that the revolution would develop through the even "ripening" of the elements of socialism, especially in the more developed, the more "advanced" countries. At the present time this view must be considerably modified.

The system of international relationships—says Lenin—has now become such that in Europe one state, namely, Germany, has been enslaved by the enslaving states. Next, a number of states including the oldest states of the West, have proved, as a result of their victory, to be in a position to take advantage of this victory to make a number of unimportant concessions to their oppressed classes, concessions which nevertheless delay the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of "social peace."

At the same time a whole series of countries, the Orient, India, China, etc., by reason of the last imperialist war, have proved to be definitely thrown out of their orbits. Their development has once and for all been directed along the general European and capitalist path. The general European ferment has begun to work in them. And it is now clear to the

entire world that they have been drawn into a line of development which cannot help but lead to the crisis of world capitalism."

In view of this fact and in connection with it

"the West European capitalist countries are completing their evolution towards socialism . . . not by the even "maturing" of socialism in these countries, but through the exploitation of some states by others, through the exploitation of the first state that was defeated in the imperialist war in conjunction with the exploitation of the entire East. The East, on the other hand, has definitely entered the revolutionary movement as a result of this first imperialist war; it has definitely been drawn into the common whirlpool of the revolutionary movement. *(Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XXVII, "Better Less but Better.")

If we add to this the fact that not only the defeated countries and colonies are being exploited by the victorious countries, but that some of the victorious countries have fallen into the orbit of financial exploitation by the more powerful of the victorious powers, America and England; that the contradictions among all these countries form a very important factor in the decay of world capitalism; that in addition to these contradictions very profound contradictions exist and are developing within each one of these countries; that all these contradictions are growing in profundity and acuteness because of the existence, alongside these countries, of the Republic of Soviets—if all this is taken into consideration, then the picture of the peculiar nature of the international situation becomes more or less complete.

Most probably, the world revolution will develop along the line of a series of new countries dropping out of the system of the imperialist countries as a result of revolution, while the proletarians of these countries will be supported by the proletariat of the imperialist states. We see that the first country to break away, the first country to win is already supported by the workers and toiling masses of other countries. Without this support it could not maintain itself. Beyond a doubt, this support will grow and become stronger and stronger. But it is likewise beyond a doubt that the very development of the world revolution, the very process of the breaking away of a number of new countries from imperialism, will be more rapid and more thorough, the more thoroughly socialism fortifies itself in the first victorious country, the faster this country is transformed into the basis for the further

unfolding of the world revolution, into the lever for the further disintegration of imperialism.

If the postulate that the *final* victory of socialism in the first country to emancipate itself is impossible without the combined efforts of the proletarians of several countries is true, then it is just as true that the world revolution will develop the more rapidly and thoroughly, the more effective the assistance rendered by the first socialist country to the workers and toiling masses of all other countries will be.

By what should this assistance be expressed?

It should be expressed, first, by the victorious country achieving the "utmost possible in one (our own) country *for* the development, support and stirring up of the revolution *in all countries.*" (*Cf. Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Chap. VII, "What Is Internationalism?")

Second, it should be expressed by the "victorious proletariat" of one country, "having expropriated the capitalists and organized its own socialist production, would rise . . . against the rest of the capitalist world, attract to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, raise revolts among them against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity, come out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." (*Cf. Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, "The United States of Europe Slogan.")

The characteristic feature of the assistance given by the victorious country is that it not only hastens the victory of the proletarians of other countries, but likewise guarantees, by facilitating this victory, the *final* victory of socialism in the first victorious country.

The most probable thing is that, side by side with the centres of imperialism in separate capitalist countries and in the systems of these countries throughout the world, centres of socialism will be created, in the course of the world revolution, in separate Soviet countries and systems of these centres throughout the world, and the struggle between these two systems will constitute the history of the development of the revolution:

> For—says Lenin—the free amalgamation of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle by the socialist republics against the backward states. *(Ibid.)*

The world significance of the October Revolution lies not only in its constituting a great start made by one country in the work of breaking through the system of imperialism and the creation of the first land of socialism in the ocean of imperialist countries, but likewise in its constituting the first stage in the world revolution and a mighty basis for its further development.

Therefore, those who, forgetting the international character of the October Revolution, declare the victory of socialism in one country to be purely national and only a national phenomenon, are wrong. And those too who, although bearing in mind the international character of the October Revolution, are inclined to regard this revolution as something passive, merely destined to accept help from without, are equally wrong. As a matter of fact not only does the October Revolution need support from the revolutionary movement of other countries, but revolution in those countries needs the support of the October Revolution in order to accelerate and advance the cause of overthrowing world imperialism.

December 17, 1924.

OCTOBER, LENIN AND THE PROSPECTS OF OUR DEVELOPMENT

I BELIEVE that in spite of the enormous difference between the period of the preparation for October which took place eight years ago and the present period, eight years after October, there is none the less one feature common to both. This common feature consists in the fact that both these periods reflect turning points in the development of our revolution. Then, in 1917, it was a question of effecting the transition from the rule of the bourgeoisie to the rule of the proletariat. Now, in 1925, it is a question of effecting a transition from the present-day economy, which cannot be called socialist as a whole, to socialist economy, to the economy which must serve as the material basis of socialist society.

What was the condition of affairs during the period of October, when the Central Committee of our Party, on October 10, 1917, under the direction of Lenin, passed the decision to organize an armed uprising?

First, war between two European coalitions, the growth all over Europe of the elements of socialist revolution and the threat of a separate peace with Russia on the part of the imperialists for the purpose of stifling the revolution in Russia. This—in the sphere of foreign affairs. Second, the conquest by our Party of a majority in the soviets, peasant uprisings all over the country, the upsurge of the revolutionary movement at the fronts, the isolation of the bourgeois government of Kerensky and the menace of a second Kornilov affair. This—in the sphere of home affairs.

This was largely the front of the political struggle.

At that time the crucial moment was decided by a victorious uprising of the workers and peasants and by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

How do matters stand now, eight years after the *débâcle* of the bourgeois state?

First, the existence of two camps in the world: the camp of *capitalism*, which is stabilizing itself temporarily while there is an obvious growth of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and dependent countries (China, Morocco, Syria, etc.) and the camp of *socialism*, of the Soviet Union, growing in its economic development and rallying to itself both the workers of the progressive countries and the oppressed nations of the colonial and dependent countries—circumstances which afford the possibility of transforming a short "respite" into a whole period of "respite." This—in the domain of foreign affairs. Second, the growing industrial and co-operative development in our country, the improvement in the material conditions of the workers and peasants, the undoubted improvement of the mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, and the increased authority of the Party among the workers and peasants—circumstances which afford the possibility of advancing socialist construction jointly with the peasantry, under the leadership of the proletariat and of its Party. This—in the sphere of home affairs.

This is largely the front of economic construction.

Whether the present critical period will result in a victory of the proletariat depends above all on the successes of our construction, on the successes of the revolutionary movement in the West and in the East, on the development of those contradictions which corrode the capitalist world.

Eight years ago the task consisted in linking up the proletariat and the poorest peasants, in neutralizing the middle strata of the peasantry, in taking advantage of the life-and-death struggle between the two imperialist coalitions and in overthrowing the bourgeois government in Russia, so as to organize the dictatorship of the proletariat, withdraw from the imperialist war, strengthen the ties with the proletarians of all countries and promote the cause of the proletarian revolution in all countries.

Now, on the one hand, the task consists in linking up the proletariat and poorest peasantry with the middle peasantry on the basis of a firm alliance between them, in ensuring the leadership

of the proletariat within this alliance, in intensifying the development and re-equipment of our industry, in drawing the millions of the peasantry into the co-operative movement and thus assuring the victory of the socialist kernel of our economy over the elements of capitalism; and, on the other hand, in setting on foot an alliance with the proletarians of all countries as well as with the colonial peoples of the oppressed countries, in order to help the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for victory over capitalism.

The neutralization of the middle peasantry is no longer sufficient. Now the task consists in establishing a firm alliance with the middle peasantry, in order to institute proper mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry. For, if Lenin's postulate that "*ten or twenty years of correct relations with the peasantry, and victory on a world scale is assured*"—is correct, the same holds good in regard to his words ". . . *to advance now in an incomparably wider and more powerful mass not otherwise than jointly with the peasantry.*"

The mere development of state industry is no longer sufficient. Certainly not at its pre-war level.

Now the task consists in promoting the re-equipment of our state industry and its further development on a new technical basis. For our state industry in its type is a socialist industry. For it constitutes the fundamental basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat in our country. For without such a basis it is useless even to talk of a transformation of our country into an industrial country, and of the N.E.P. Russia into Socialist Russia.

The mere development of co-operation in the village is no longer sufficient. Now the task consists in drawing the millions of the peasantry into co-operation and to *plant co-operative organizations in the villages.* For co-operation under the dictatorship of the proletariat, when there is an industry socialist in type, is the *principal* gear for bringing the peasantry into the system of socialist construction.

Such, in the main, are the conditions necessary for the victory of socialist construction in our country.

Eight years ago the Party scored a victory over the bourgeois government, because it knew how to display Leninist firmness in

carrying out the tasks of the proletariat, in spite of incredible difficulties, in spite of vacillations in some of its separate detachments.

Now, after a lapse of eight years, the Party has every possibility of ensuring victory over the capitalist elements in our economy, provided it will be able to show the old Leninist firmness in carrying out its tasks, in spite of the multitude of difficulties confronting it, in spite of the possible vacillations in some of its detachments.

Leninist firmness in carrying out the urgent tasks of the proletariat is also one of the most necessary conditions for the victory of socialist construction.

Pravda, No. 225, November 7, 1925.

THE THREE BASIC SLOGANS OF THE PARTY ON THE PEASANT QUESTION

(*Reply to* COMRADE YAN—SKY)

COMRADE YAN—SKY,

I, of course, duly received your letter. I am replying after some delay, for which please forgive me.

1. Lenin says that "*the main question of every revolution is, undoubtedly, the question of state power.*" * (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, "One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution.") In the hands of which class, or which classes, is power concentrated; which class, or which classes, must be overthrown; which class, or which classes, must take power—such is "the main question of every revolution."

The basic strategic slogans of the Party that retain their validity during the whole period of any particular stage of the revolution cannot be designated basic slogans if they are not fully and completely founded on this cardinal thesis of Lenin's. Basic slogans are correct slogans only if they are built on the basis of a Marxian analysis of class forces, only if they indicate the correct plan of disposition of the revolutionary forces along the front of the class struggle, only if they assist in bringing the masses up to the front of the struggle for the triumph of the revolution and for the seizure of power by the new class, and only if they assist the Party in forming a large and powerful political army from among the broad masses of the people, which is essential for the fulfilment of this task.

Defeats and retreats, failures and tactical errors may occur during any given stage of the revolution; but that does not mean that the fundamental strategical slogan is wrong. For instance, the basic slogan during the *first* stage of our revolution, namely,

* My italics.—*J. S.*

"together with the whole peasantry, against the tsar and the landlords, with the bourgeoisie neutralized, for the triumph of the bourgeois-democratic revolution" was an absolutely correct slogan, in spite of the fact that the Revolution of 1905 was unsuccessful.

In other words, we must not confuse the question of the basic slogan of the Party with the question of the defeat or failure of the revolution at any particular stage of its development.

It may happen that in the course of the revolution the basic slogan of the Party may have already led to the overthrow of the power of the old classes, or of the old class, but that a number of essential demands of the revolution, following from that slogan, have not been achieved or that their achievement has been delayed for a long period of time, or that their achievement may require a new revolution. Nevertheless, that would not mean that the basic slogan is wrong. For instance, the February Revolution of 1917 overthrew tsarism and the landlords, but it did not lead to the confiscation of the estates of the landlords, and so on. That, however, does not mean that our basic slogan in the first stage of the revolution was wrong. Or, further, the October Revolution brought about the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the proletariat, but did not immediately lead to a) the final completion of the bourgeois revolution in general and b) the isolation of the kulaks in the rural districts in particular; these were delayed for a certain period of time. That, however does not mean that our basic slogan during the *second* stage of the revolution, namely, "together with the poorest peasantry, against capitalism in town and country, with the middle peasantry neutralized, for the power of the proletariat," was wrong.

In other words, the question of the basic slogan of the Party must not be confused with the question of the time and forms of achieving any particular demand arising out of that slogan.

Consequently, the strategic slogans of our Party cannot be judged from the point of view of episodical successes or defeats of the revolutionary movement in any particular period; still less can it be judged from the point of view of the times or forms of achieving any particular demands that arise out of those slogans.

The strategic slogan of the Party can be judged only from the point of view of a Marxian analysis of the class forces and of the correct disposition of the revolutionary forces on the battle front of the struggle for the triumph of the revolution and the concentration of power in the hands of the new class.

Your error, Comrade Yan—sky, is that you overlooked, or did not understand, this important methodological question.

2. You write in your letter:

> Is it correct to assert that we were in alliance with the whole peasantry *only* up to October? No, it is not. The slogan of an "alliance with the whole peasantry" was in effect before October, *during October and in the first period after October,* inasmuch as the whole peasantry was interested in completing the bourgeois revolution.

From this quotation it follows that the strategic slogan of the Party in the *first* stage of the revolution (1905 to February 1917), when the task was to overthrow the power of the tsar and the landlords and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, *did not differ* from the strategical slogan of the *second* stage of the revolution (February 1917 to October 1917), when the task was to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. In other words, you deny the fundamental difference between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the proletarian-socialist revolution. You commit this error because, apparently, you will not understand so simple a matter as that the basic theme of a strategic slogan is the question of power in the particular stage of the revolution, the question as to *which* class is being overthrown and into the hands of *which* class power is being transferred. It need hardly be shown that on this point you are grievously mistaken.

You state that we applied the slogan of an "alliance with the *whole* peasantry" during October as well as in the first period after October, inasmuch as the whole peasantry was interested in completing the bourgeois revolution. But who told you that the October insurrection and the October Revolution were confined to, or made it their basic task to complete, the bourgeois revolution? Where did you get that from? Can the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat be effected within the framework of the

bourgeois revolution? Does not the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat mean breaking through the framework of the bourgeois revolution? How can you assert that the kulaks (who, of course, are also peasants) could support the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the proletariat? How can it be denied that the decree on the nationalization of the land, the abolition of private property in land, the prohibition of the purchase and sale of land, etc., in spite of the fact that it cannot be regarded as a socialist decree, was carried out by us in a *struggle against* the kulaks, and not in alliance with them? How can it be asserted that the kulaks (who are also peasants) could support the decrees of the Soviet power regarding the expropriation of mills and factories, railways, banks, etc., or the slogan of the proletariat regarding the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war? How can it be asserted that it was not these and similar acts, not the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat that represented the *fundamental* feature of October, but the completion of the bourgeois revolution?

No one denies that one of the chief aims of the October Revolution was to complete the bourgeois revolution, that the latter could not have been completed without the October Revolution, just as the October Revolution itself could not have been consolidated without the bourgeois revolution having been completed; and that, inasmuch as the October Revolution completed the bourgeois revolution, it could not but meet with the sympathy of all the peasants. All that is undeniable. But can it for this reason be asserted that the completion of the bourgeois revolution was not a derivative of the October Revolution but its essential feature, its chief aim? What then becomes of the chief aim of the October Revolution, namely, the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, the expropriation of the capitalists, etc.? And if the main theme of a strategic slogan is the basic question of every revolution, *i.e.*, the question of transfer of power from one class to another class, is it not obvious that the question of the completion of the bour-

geois revolution by the proletarian power must not be confused with the question of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie by the proletarian power and the conquest of that proletarian power, *i.e.*, with the question that represented the main theme of the strategic slogan of the second stage of the revolution.

One of the greatest merits of the dictatorship of the proletariat lies in the fact that it completed the bourgeois revolution and entirely swept away the debris of medievalism. This was of supreme and indeed decisive importance for the rural districts; without it that association of peasant wars with the proletarian revolution of which Marx spoke in the second half of the last century could not have been achieved. Without it the proletarian revolution itself could not have been consolidated. Moreover, the following important circumstance should be borne in mind. The completion of the bourgeois revolution was not a single act. In fact it was spread over a whole period embracing not only parts of 1918, as you assert in your letter, but also parts of 1919 (the Volga provinces and the Urals) and of 1919 and 1920 (the Ukraine), I am referring to the advance of Kolchak and Denikin, when the peasantry, as a whole, was faced with the danger of the restoration of the power of the landlords and when the peasantry precisely as a *whole* was obliged to rally around the Soviet power in order to ensure the completion of the bourgeois revolution and to preserve the fruits of that revolution. We must always bear in mind the complexity and variety of the processes of actual experience, the "fantastic" interweaving of the immediate socialist tasks of the dictatorship with the task of completing the bourgeois revolution, if we are to understand correctly both the quotations from Lenin cited above and the mechanics of achieving the Party slogans. Can it be asserted that this interweaving proves that the slogan of the Party in the *second* stage of the revolution was wrong, and that this slogan does not differ from the slogan of the *first* stage of the revolution? Not at all. On the contrary, this interweaving merely confirms the correctness of the Party slogan in the second stage of the revolution, namely, together with the *poorest* peasantry, against the capitalist bourgeoisie in town and country, for the power of the proletariat, etc. Why? Because in order to com-

plete the bourgeois revolution it was *first* necessary, in October, to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and to set up the power of the proletariat, for only this power is capable of completing the bourgeois revolution. And in order to set up the power of the proletariat in October it was necessary to prepare and organize, for October, the *requisite* political army, which would be capable of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and of setting up the power of the proletariat. And there is no need to prove that *such* a political army could be prepared and organized *only* under the slogan: an alliance of the proletariat with the poorest peasantry, against the bourgeoisie, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is obvious that without *this* strategic slogan, which we carried out from April 1917 until October 1917, we would never have had such a political army; in other words, we would not have triumphed in October, we would not have overthrown the power of the bourgeoisie and, consequently, we would not have been able to complete the bourgeois revolution.

That is why the completion of the bourgeois revolution cannot be set up against the strategic slogan of the second stage of the revolution, the purpose of which was to guarantee the seizure of power by the proletariat.

There is only one way to avoid all these "contradictions," namely, to admit that there is a fundamental difference between the strategic slogan of the first stage of the revolution (the bourgeois-democratic revolution) and the strategic slogan of the second stage of the revolution (the proletarian revolution) and to admit that in the first stage of the revolution we marched together with the *whole* peasantry for the bourgeois-democratic revolution, while in the second stage of the revolution we marched together with the *poorest* peasantry against the power of capitalism and for the proletarian revolution. It is essential to admit this, because an analysis of the class forces in the first and second stages of the revolution obliges us to do so. Otherwise it would be impossible to explain the fact that until February 1917 we carried on our work under the slogan of a revolutionary-*democratic* dictatorship of the proletariat and the *peasantry*, while after February 1917 this slogan was replaced by the slogan

of the *socialist* dictatorship of the proletariat and the *poorest* peasantry. Confess, Comrade Yan—sky, that the substitution of one slogan by another in March and April 1917 cannot be explained by your scheme.

This fundamental difference between the two strategic slogans of the Party was pointed out by Lenin in his pamphlet *Two Tactics*. He formulated the slogan of the Party during the period of preparation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution as follows:

> The proletariat must carry out to the end the democratic revolution, and in this unite to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VIII, "Two Tactics, etc," Chap. 12.)

In other words: together with the whole peasantry against the autocracy, with the bourgeoisie neutralized, for a democratic revolution.

The slogan of the Party in the period of preparation for the socialist revolution he formulated as follows:

> The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution and in this unite to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie. (*Ibid.*)

In other words: together with the poorest peasantry and the semi-proletarian sections of the population in general, against the bourgeoisie—the petty bourgeoisie in town and country being neutralized—for the socialist revolution.

That was in 1905.

In April 1917, Lenin, describing the then existing political situation as an interweaving of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry with the actual power of the bourgeoisie, said:

> The peculiarity of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a transition from the *first* * stage of the revolution, which because of the inadequate organization and insufficient class consciousness of the proletariat, handed power to the bourgeoisie—to its *second* stage, which is to place power in the hands of the proletariat and the *poorest* strata of the peasantry. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, "The April Theses.")

Towards the end of August 1917, when the preparations for

* My italics.—*J. S.*

the October Revolution were in full swing, Lenin, in an article entitled "The Peasants and the Workers," wrote as follows:

> Only the proletariat and the *peasantry* * could overthrow the monarchy —that, in accordance with the times [*i.e.*, 1905—*J.S.*], was the fundamental statement of our class policy. And this statement was correct. February and March 1917 proved this again.
>
> Only the proletariat, leading the *poorest peasantry* * (the semi-proletarians, as our program calls them) can end the war with a democratic peace, can heal its wounds, can begin to make the absolutely necessary and urgent steps towards socialism—this is the present statement of our class policy. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Part I, "The Peasants and the Workers.")

That should not be understood to mean that we have a dictatorship of the proletariat *and* the poorest peasantry *now*. That, of course, is not so. We marched towards October under the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry and in October achieved it formally, inasmuch as we had a *bloc* with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and shared the leadership with them, although actually the dictatorship of the proletariat already existed, since we Bolsheviks constituted the majority. However, the dictatorship of the proletariat *and* the poorest peasantry ceased to exist formally after the Left Socialist-Revolutionary *putsch*, after the rupture of the *bloc* with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, when the leadership passed *completely and entirely* into the hands of *one* party, into the hands of our Party, which does not share, and must not share the guidance of the state with any other party. This is what we mean by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Finally, in November 1918, Lenin, casting a retrospective glance along the path the revolution had followed, wrote:

> Yes, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution *as long as* we march *together with* the peasantry as a whole. That we realized absolutely clearly; we stated it a hundred and a thousand times in 1905; we never attempted to skip this essential phase of the historical process nor to abolish it by decrees. . . . But in 1917, from the month of *April, long before the October Revolution and before we seized power*, we openly said and explained to the people: now the revolution cannot stop there; for the country has gone ahead, capitalism has moved on, ruin has reached unparalleled dimensions, which will *demand* (whether they like it or not), will demand that steps be taken towards socialism. For there was *no* other way of moving

* My italics.—*J. S.*

forward, no other way of saving the country racked by war, and no other way of relieving the sufferings of the toilers and exploited. And it turned out just as we had foretold. The course of revolution confirmed the correctness of our arguments. *At first,* together with *all* the peasantry against the monarchy, against the landlords, against medievalism (and to that extent the revolution remained bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). *Then,* together with the poorest peasantry, together with the semi-proletariat, together with all the exploited, *against capitalism,* including the *rural rich, the kulaks and the speculators,* and to that extent the revolution becomes a *socialist* revolution. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XXIII, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky.)

As you see Lenin repeatedly pointed out how profound was the difference between the first strategic slogan of the period of preparation for the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the second strategic slogan of the period of preparation for the October Revolution. The first slogan was: *together with the whole peasantry* against the autocracy; the second slogan: *together with the poorest peasantry* against the bourgeoisie.

The fact that the completion of the bourgeois revolution dragged on for a whole period after October and that since we were completing the bourgeois revolution the "whole" peasantry could not but sympathize with us, does not, as I said above, in the least disturb the fundamental postulate that we moved towards October and triumphed in October together with the *poorest peasantry,* that we overthrew the power of the bourgeoisie and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat (one of the tasks of which was to complete the bourgeois revolution) together with the *poorest peasantry* and against the resistance of the kulaks (also peasants) and the vacillations of the middle peasantry.

That is clear, I think.

3. You write further in your letter:

Is the assertion true that "*we arrived at October* under the slogan of an *alliance with the rural poor and the neutralization of the middle peasant?*" No, it is not true. For the reasons mentioned above, and from the quotations from Lenin, it will be seen that this slogan could arise only when "the class division within the peasantry had matured" (Lenin), *i.e.,* in the summer and autumn of 1918.

It follows from this quotation that the Party adopted the policy of neutralizing the middle peasant not in the period of preparation for October and during October, but after October, and particularly after 1918, after the setting up of the Committees of

Poor Peasants. That is *absolutely untrue*, Comrade Yan—sky. On the contrary, the policy of neutralizing the middle peasant did not begin, but *ended* after the setting up of the Committees of Poor Peasants, after 1918. The policy of neutralizing the middle peasant was *abandoned* (and not introduced) after 1918. It was after 1918, in March 1919, that Lenin, opening the Eighth Congress of our Party stated:

> The best representatives of socialism of the old days—when they still believed in revolution and served it in theory and ideology—spoke of the neutralization of the peasantry, *i.e.*, of transforming this middle peasantry into a social stratum, which, if it did not actively aid the revolution of the proletariat, at least would not hinder our work, would remain neutral and would not take the side of our enemies. This abstract, theoretical statement of the task is perfectly clear to us. *But it is not enough.** We have entered a *phase of socialist construction** in which we must draw up concrete and detailed basic rules and instructions which have been tested by the experience of our work in the rural districts, by which we must guide ourselves in order to achieve a *stable alliance* with the middle peasantry. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV, "Speech at the Opening of the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party [Bolsheviks].")

As you see, this is something directly contrary to what you say in your letter. You turn our *actual* Party practice upside down by confusing the *beginning* of neutralization with its *end.*

The middle peasant whined and vacillated between revolution and counter-revolution as long as the bourgeoisie was being overthrown and as long as the Soviet power was not consolidated; therefore it was necessary to neutralize him. The middle peasant began to turn towards us when he began to convince himself that the bourgeoisie had been overthrown "for good," that the Soviet power was being consolidated, that the kulak was being overcome and that the Red Army was beginning to triumph on the fronts of the civil war. And it was after such a change that the third strategic slogan of the Party, announced by Lenin at the Eighth Party Congress, became possible, namely, with the support of the poor peasants and by establishing a stable alliance with the middle peasants, to march forward towards socialist construction.

How could you have forgotten this well-known fact?

It further follows from your letter that the policy of neutralizing the middle peasant during the *transition* toward the prole-

* My italics.—*J. S.*

tarian revolution and in the *first days* after the triumph of that revolution is incorrect, unsuitable and therefore unacceptable. This is *absolutely wrong,* Comrade Yan—sky. Just the contrary is the case. It is precisely while the power of the bourgeoisie is being overthrown and until the power of the proletariat is consolidated that the middle peasant vacillates and resists most of all. And it is precisely at this period that alliance with the poor peasant and neutralization of the middle peasant are essential.

Persisting in your error, you assert that the question of the peasantry is of great importance not only for our country, but also for other countries "which more or less resemble the economic system of pre-October Russia." The latter statement is, of course, true. But this is what Lenin said in his *Theses on the Agrarian Question* at the Second Congress of the Comintern regarding the policy of proletarian parties towards the middle peasant in the period when power is seized by the proletariat. After defining the poorest peasantry, or more precisely, "the toiling and exploited masses of the countryside," as a separate group consisting of agricultural labourers, semi-proletarians, or dwarf peasants and small peasants, and proceeding to deal with the question of the middle peasantry as a separate group in the rural districts, Lenin said:

> In the economic sense the term "middle peasantry" applies to small husbandmen, who also possess, either by right of ownership or by lease, small plots of land, but such that under capitalism, as a rule, provide not only modest support for the family and the farm, but also the possibility of obtaining a certain surplus, which, at least in good years, is capable of being transformed into capital, and who fairly frequently resort to the hire of the labour power of others. . . . The revolutionary proletariat cannot set itself the aim—at least *in the immediate future* and in *the early period of the dictatorship of the proletariat*—of winning the adherence of this section. *It must confine itself to the task of neutralizing it, i.e.,* inducing it not to offer active support to the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the proletariat. *(Cf. Stenographic Report of the Second Congress of Comintern,* [Russian] pp. 610-11.)

How, after this, can it be asserted that the policy of neutralizing the middle peasant arose only "in the summer and autumn of 1918," *i.e., after* the decisive successes achieved in the consolidation of the power of the soviets, the power of the proletariat?

As you see, the question of the strategic slogan of proletarian

parties at the moment of transition to the socialist revolution and the consolidation of the power of the proletariat, as well as the question of the neutralization of the middle peasant, are not so simple as you imagine.

4. From all that has been said above it is clear that the quotations from the works of Lenin cited by you cannot be opposed to the basic slogan of our Party in the second stage of the revolution, since these quotations a) deal, not with the basic slogan of the Party *prior to* October, but with the completion of the bourgeois revolution *after* October and b) they do not refute, but confirm the correctness of that slogan. I have already mentioned above, and am obliged to repeat, that the strategic slogan of the Party in the second stage of the revolution, in the period *prior to* the seizure of power by the proletariat, the chief theme of which is the question of power, cannot be set up in opposition to the task of completing the bourgeois revolution, which is effected in the period *following* the seizure of power by the proletariat.

5. You speak of the well-known article by Comrade Molotov in *Pravda,* entitled "The Bourgeois Revolution in Our Country" (March 12, 1927), which it appears "induced" you to apply to me for an explanation. I do not know how you read articles, Comrade Yan—sky. I, too, have read Comrade Molotov's article and do not think that it in any way contradicts what I said in my report to the Fourteenth Congress of our Party on the slogans of our Party regarding the peasantry. In his article, Comrade Molotov does not deal with the basic slogan of the Party in the period of October, but with the fact that, inasmuch as the Party after October, completed the bourgeois revolution, it enjoyed the sympathy of the peasants. But I have already stated above that the recognition of this fact does not refute, but on the contrary confirms the correctness of the fundamental postulate that we overthrew the power of the bourgeoisie and established the dictatorship of the proletariat together with the poorest peasantry, the middle peasant being neutralized, and against the bourgeoisie of town and country, and that but for that, we would not have completed the bourgeois revolution.

The Bolshevik (Russian), No. 7-8, April 15, 1927.

THE SLOGAN OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE POOREST PEASANTRY IN THE PERIOD OF PREPARATION FOR OCTOBER

(*Reply to* Comrade S. Pokrovsky)

Comrade Pokrovsky,

I think that your letter of May 2 provides neither pretext nor foundation for a reply in detail, point by point, so to speak. Indeed, it offers nothing particularly new as compared with Comrade Yan—sky's letter. I am replying to your letter only because it contains certain elements directly restoring the Kamenevist views of the period of April and May 1917. It is only for the purpose of exposing these elements of restoration of Kamenevism that I consider it necessary to make a brief reply to your letter.

1. In your letter you state that "in fact, during the period from February to October we had the slogan of an alliance with the *whole* of the peasantry" and that "during the period from February to October the Party supported and defended its *old* slogan in relation to the peasantry: an alliance with the peasantry *as a whole*."

It follows from this, first, that during the period of preparation for October (April to October) the Bolsheviks did not consider it their task to draw a line between the poorest peasants and the well-to-do peasants, but accepted the peasants as a whole.

Second, it follows that during the period of preparation for October the Bolsheviks did not replace the old slogan of a "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" by a new slogan, namely, the "dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry," but retained the old positions laid down in Lenin's pamphlet *Two Tactics* in 1905.

Third, it follows that the policy of the Bolsheviks of combat-

ing the vacillations and compromising tactics of the soviets during the period of preparation for October (March to October 1917), the vacillations of the middle peasants within the soviets and on the battle fronts, the vacillations between revolution and counter-revolution and the vacillations and compromise that became particularly acute in the July days, when the soviets, headed by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik compromisers, allied themselves with the counter-revolutionary generals in order to isolate the Bolsheviks—it follows that the fight waged by the Bolsheviks against these vacillations and this compromise among certain strata of the peasantry was purposeless and absolutely unnecessary.

And, finally, it follows that Kamenev was right when, in April and May 1917, he defended the old slogan of a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, while Lenin, who regarded this slogan as already out-of-date and who proclaimed the new slogan of a dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry, was wrong.

These questions have only to be formulated for the absurdity of the whole of your letter to become apparent.

But since you happen to be a great lover of isolated quotations from the works of Lenin, let us turn to the quotations.

It does not require much effort to prove that what Lenin regarded as the *new* factor in the agrarian relations in Russia after the February Revolution, from the point of view of the further development of the revolution, was not the community of interests of the proletariat and the peasantry as a whole, but the *split* that had taken place between the poorest peasants and the well-to-do peasants, of whom the former, *i.e.*, the poorest peasants, gravitated toward the proletariat, whereas the latter, *i.e.*, the well-to-do peasants, supported the Provisional Government.

This is what Lenin said on the subject in his argument against Kamenev and Kamenevism in *April* 1917.

> . . . The proletarian party at present must not place any hopes on the community of interests of the proletariat and the peasantry. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book I, "The All-Russian April Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.")

And further:

Already we can discern in the decisions of a number of peasant congresses a tendency to wait with the solution of the agrarian question until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly—this represents a victory for the *well-to-do* * peasantry which leans towards the Cadets. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book I, "The Petrograd City Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.")

And again:

It is possible that the peasantry might seize all the land and all the power. Not only do I not forget this possibility, not only do I not limit my horizon to the present, but I definitely and clearly formulate the agrarian program taking into account the new *phenomenon, i.e.*, the deeper *chasm* * between the agricultural labourers and poorest peasants on the one hand and the peasant owners on the other hand. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book I, "Letter on Tactics," written in April 1917.)

That is the *new* and *important* factor that Lenin discerned in the new situation in the rural districts *after* the February Revolution.

That is what Lenin based himself on when deciding the policy of the Party after February 1917.

That was the position that Lenin adopted when at the Petrograd City Conference, in April 1917, he said:

Only here on the spot have we learned that the Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies has surrendered its power to the Provisional Government. The Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies represents the realization of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the soldiers; among the latter, the majority are peasants. It is therefore a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants. But this "dictatorship" has entered into an agreement with the bourgeoisie. And here it is where *the "old" Bolshevism* * *is in need of revision.* (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book I, "Report on the Political Situation.")

Lenin started out from this postulate when, in April 1917, he wrote:

He who *now* speaks only of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" is behind the times and has consequently *gone over* in practice to the side of the petty bourgeoisie and against the proletarian class struggle; such a one should be relegated to the archives of "Bolshevik" pre-revolutionary antiques (one may call it the archive of "Old Bolsheviks"). (*Ibid.*, "Letters on Tactics.")

It was on this foundation that the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the *poorest* peasantry arose, *replacing* the old slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

* My italics.—*J. S.*

You might say, as you do in your letter, that this is a Trotskyist way of skipping the uncompleted peasant revolution; but that is just as convincing as the objections that were levelled by Kamenev against Lenin in April 1917. Lenin took this objection fully into account when he said:

> Trotskyism—"No tsar but a workers' government." This surely is false. There is a petty bourgeoisie, it cannot be ignored. But it is made up of two groups. The *poorer** of the two is with the working class. (*Ibid.*, "The Petrograd City Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.")

Comrade Kamenev's error, and now yours, Comrade Pokrovsky, consists in the inability to discern and emphasize the difference between the two sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, in this case the peasantry, in the inability to *distinguish* the poorest section of the peasantry from the mass of the peasantry as a whole, and build up on that basis the Party policy in the conditions of the transition from the first stage of the revolution in 1917 to the second stage; in the inability to deduce from this the new slogan, the second strategic slogan of the Party, *viz.*, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry.

We will trace the subsequent history of the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry from April to October 1917, in the works of Lenin.

April 1917.

> The peculiarity of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a *transition* from the *first** stage of the revolution, which, because of the inadequate organization and insufficient class consciousness of the proletariat, handed power to the bourgeoisie—to its *second* stage, which is to place power in the hands of the proletariat and the *poorest strata of the peasantry*. (*Cf. The April Theses, Ibid.*)

July 1917.

> The revolutionary workers alone, when supported by the *poorest peasants,** will be able to break the resistance of the capitalists, to lead the people to the conquest of the land without compensation, to full freedom, to victory over famine, to victory over the war and to a just and lasting peace. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Book I, "Lessons of the Revolution.")

August 1917.

> Only the proletariat, leading the *poorest peasantry** (semi-proletarians, as our program calls them) can end the war with a democratic peace,

* My italics.—*J. S.*

can heal its wounds, can begin to make the absolutely necessary and *urgent* steps towards socialism—this is the present statement of our class *policy*. (*Ibid.*, "The Peasants and the Workers.")

September 1917.

Only the dictatorship of the proletarians and the *poorest peasants* * is capable of crushing the resistance of the capitalists, of manifesting a real and grandiose courage and decisiveness of authority, of securing for itself the enthusiastic, devoted, really heroic support of the masses both in the army and in the peasantry. (*Ibid.*, "One of the Fundamental Questions.")

September-October 1917, Lenin, in his pamphlet *Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* in his polemics with the *Novaya Zhizn* ** wrote:

Either * all power to the bourgeoisie—this you have not defended for a long time, indeed not even the bourgeoisie itself dares to hint at it, knowing that already on April 20-21 the people overthrew such power by one movement of their shoulder, and would overthrow it now thrice as determinedly and mercilessly. *Or* * power to the petty bourgeoisie—that is, to its coalition (union, agreement) with the bourgeoisie, for the petty bourgeoisie cannot and does not wish to take power independently, as has been proved by the experience of all revolutions; and also proved by economic science, which explains that in a capitalist country one can stand for capital, one can stand for labour but one cannot stand in the middle. This coalition in Russia has tried dozens of methods for half a year, and has failed.

*Or,** finally, all power to the proletarians and *poorest peasantry,** against the bourgeoisie in order to break its resistance. This has not yet been tried, and this you, gentlemen of the *Novaya Zhizn*, *dissuade* the people from doing, you try to scare them with the bourgeoisie as you yourselves are scared.

No fourth course can even be conceived of. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Book II, "Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?")

Those are the facts.

You, however, "successfully" evade all these facts and incidents in the history of the preparation for the October Revolution; you "successfully" expunge from the history of bolshevism the *struggle* waged by the Bolsheviks during the period of preparation for October against the *vacillations* and the *compromising tactics* of the "peasant owners" represented at that time in the soviets; you "successfully" *bury* Lenin's slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry

* My italics.—*J. S.*
** *New Life.—Ed.*

and at the same time imagine that this is not violating history and Leninism.

From these citations, which can be multiplied, you will see, Comrade Pokrovsky, that after February 1917, the Bolsheviks took as their starting point not the peasantry as a whole, but the poorest section of the peasantry, and moved forward towards October, not under the *old* slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, but under the *new* slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry.

It will be seen from this that the Bolsheviks carried out this slogan in a fight against the vacillations and compromising tactics of the soviets against the vacillations and compromising tactics of a certain section of the peasantry represented in the soviets, and against the vacillations and compromising tactics of certain petty-bourgeois democratic parties known as Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

It will be seen from this that without the new slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry, we would have been unable to assemble a sufficiently powerful political army capable of overcoming the compromising tactics of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, of neutralizing the vacillations of a certain section of the peasantry, of overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and of thus making it possible to complete the bourgeois revolution.

It will be seen from this that "we moved toward October and triumphed in October together with the poorest peasantry and against the resistance of the kulaks (also peasants) and the vacillations of the middle peasantry." (*Cf.* my "Reply to Comrade Yan—sky.")

It follows, therefore, that in April 1917, and during the whole period of preparation for October, Lenin was right, and not Kamenev, and that you, Comrade Pokrovsky, by now restoring Kamenevism, are falling into not very good company.

2. As against all that which has been said above, you quote Lenin to the effect that in October 1917, we took power with the help of the peasantry *as a whole.* That we took power with a *certain amount* of support from the peasantry as a whole

is absolutely true. But you forgot to add a "trifle," namely, that the peasantry *as a whole* supported us in October, and after October, only in so far as we brought the bourgeois revolution to completion. That is a very important "trifle," a trifle which in the present instance decides the issue. It does not befit a Bolshevik, Comrade Pokrovsky, to "forget" so important a "trifle" and thus confuse so important an issue.

From your letter it appears that you *contrast* the words of Lenin regarding the support given by the peasantry *as a whole* to the Party slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and the *poorest* peasantry, which was also issued by Lenin. But in order to contrast these words of Lenin to the quotations from the works of Lenin we have cited, and in order to have grounds for refuting the quotations from Lenin regarding the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry by the words of Lenin himself regarding the peasantry as a whole, two things, at least, must be proved.

First: It must be proved that the completion of the bourgeois revolution was the *main thing* in the October Revolution. Lenin considers that the completion of the bourgeois revolution was a "by-product" of the October Revolution, which fulfilled this task "in passing." You must first refute this thesis of Lenin and prove that the *main thing* in the October Revolution was not the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the proletariat, but the completion of the bourgeois revolution. Try to prove that, Comrade Pokrovsky, and then I shall be ready to admit that from April to October 1917 the Party's slogan was not dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry, but dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. It appears from your letter that you do not think it possible to assume this rather more than risky task, but you try, however, to prove "in passing" that on one of the most important questions of the October Revolution, the question of peace, we presumably were supported by the peasantry as a whole. That, of course, is untrue. It is absolutely untrue, Comrade Pokrovsky. On this question of peace you adopt the viewpoint of the philistine. The fact is that for us at that time the question of peace was a question

of power, for only with the transfer of power to the proletariat could we expect to extricate ourselves from the imperialist war. You, apparently, have forgotten what Lenin said, that "the way to stop the war is to transfer power to another class" and that "Down with War"—does not mean flinging bayonets away. "It means the passing of power to another class." (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Speech at the Petrograd City Conference in April 1917, Vol. XX, pp. 206 and 203.)

One of two things, therefore: you must either prove that the *most important thing* in the October Revolution was the completion of the bourgeois revolution, or you do not prove it; in the latter case it obviously follows that the peasantry *as a whole* supported us in the October Revolution only *to the extent* that we carried the bourgeois revolution to completion.

Second: You must prove that the Bolsheviks could have secured the support of the peasantry as a whole both during October and after October in so far as they completed the bourgeois revolution *without* systematically carrying out the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and the *poorest* peasantry during the whole period of preparation for October, *without* a systematic fight against the compromising tactics of the petty-bourgeois parties, which follows from this slogan, and *without* the systematic exposure of the vacillations of certain sections of the peasantry and of their representatives in the soviets, which also follows from this slogan. Try to prove that, Comrade Pokrovsky. Indeed, why did we succeed in securing the support of the peasantry as a whole in October and after October? Because we were in a position to complete the bourgeois revolution. Why were we able to do this? Because we were able to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and replace it by the power of the proletariat, which alone is able to complete the bourgeois revolution. Why were we able to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and set up the power of the proletariat? Because we prepared for October under the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and the *poorest* peasantry, because, proceeding from this slogan we waged a systematic struggle against the compromising tactics of the petty-bourgeois parties, because, proceeding from this slogan,

we waged a systematic struggle against the vacillations of the middle peasants in the soviets and because *only with the aid of this slogan* were we able to overcome the vacillations of the middle peasant, defeat the compromising tactics of the petty-bourgeois parties and assemble a political army capable of conducting the struggle for the transfer of power to the proletariat. It need hardly be shown that without these preliminary conditions, which determined the fate of the October Revolution, we should not have obtained the support of the peasantry *as a whole* either before or after October.

It is in this way that the combination of peasant wars with the proletarian revolution is to be understood, Comrade Pokrovsky.

That is why *to contrast* the support given by the peasantry as a whole during October and after October with the fact that the preparations for October were made under the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the *poorest* peasantry implies a *complete failure to understand Leninism.*

Your chief error, Comrade Pokrovsky, lies in the fact that you failed to understand either the interweaving of *socialist* tasks during the October Revolution with the task of completing the *bourgeois* revolution, or the mechanics of practically achieving the various demands of the October Revolution that followed from the second strategic slogan of the Party regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry.

Reading your letter one might think that it was not we who used the peasantry in the service of the proletarian revolution but that on the contrary it was "the peasantry as a whole," including the kulaks, who used the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks would be in a deplorable condition indeed if they so easily "entered" the service of non-proletarian classes.

Kamenevism of April 1917—that is what is dragging at your feet, Comrade Pokrovsky.

3: You assert that Stalin can see no difference between the conditions prevailing in 1905 and those prevailing in February 1917. That, of course, is not to be taken seriously. I did not say that, and could not have said it. All I said in my letter was that the slogan issued by the Party in 1905 regarding the dictatorship

of the proletariat and the peasantry was confirmed in the February Revolution of 1917. That, of course, is true. That is exactly how Lenin described the situation in August 1917, in his article "Peasants and Workers":

> Only the proletariat and the peasantry can overthrow the monarchy—that, in accordance with the times [*i.e.*, 1905—*J. S.*] was the fundamental statement of our class policy. And this position was correct. *February and March proved this again.** (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Book I.)

You are simply trying to find fault—my too "dialectical" comrade.

4: You try furthermore to trip up Stalin and to show that he is contradicting himself by contrasting his thesis on the compromising tactics of the middle peasants *prior to October* with a quotation from his pamphlet *Problems of Leninism*, which speaks of the possibility of building up socialism together with the middle peasantry *after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been consolidated.* It does not require much effort to prove that to make these two different phenomena identical is absolutely unscientific. The middle peasant before October, when the bourgeoisie was in power, and the middle peasant after the dictatorship of the proletariat had been consolidated, when the bourgeoisie has already been expropriated, when the co-operative movement has become developed and the basic means of production are in the hands of the proletariat, are two different things. To make these two different kinds of middle peasants identical and to treat them on an equal footing is to study phenomena abstracted from historical conditions and to lose all sense of perspective. It is something like the Zinoviev manner of mixing up dates or periods in quoting. If this is what is called "revolutionary dialectics," it must be admitted that you, Comrade Pokrovsky, have beaten all records for "dialectical" hair-splitting.

5: I shall not deal with the remaining questions, because I think they have been exhaustively dealt with in the correspondence with Comrade Yan—sky.

May 20, 1927.
First Printed in 1928.

* My italics.—*J. S.*

THE INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

(On the Occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the October Revolution)

THE October Revolution is not merely a revolution "within national bounds." It is, above all, a revolution of an international, "world-embracing" order, for it denotes a radical turn in the universal history of mankind, away from the old, capitalist world to the new, socialist world.

Revolutions in the past usually ended in changing one group of exploiters at the helm of the ship of state for another such group. The exploiters would change, while exploitation remained. Such was the case during the emancipatory movements of the slaves. Such was the case during the period of the rebellions of the serfs. Such was the case during the period of the well-known "great" revolutions in England, France and Germany. I do not refer to the Paris Commune which was the first glorious, heroic and yet unsuccessful attempt on the part of the proletariat to turn history against capitalism.

The October Revolution differs from these revolutions *in point of principle.* It sets as its aim not the replacement of one form of exploitation by another form of exploitation, of one group of exploiters by another group of exploiters, but the abolition of all exploitation of man by man, the abolition of any and every exploiting group, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the establishment of the power of the most revolutionary class of all oppressed classes hitherto existing, the organization of a new, classless, socialist society.

It is precisely for this reason that the *victory* of the October Revolution means a radical change in the history of mankind, a radical change in the historical destinies of world capitalism, a

radical change in the movement for the emancipation of the world proletariat, a radical change in the methods of struggle and the forms of organization, in the everyday life and traditions, in the culture and ideology of exploited masses throughout the world.

Upon this is based the fact that the October Revolution is a revolution of an international, universal order.

This constitutes also the root cause of that profound sympathy which the oppressed classes of all countries cherish for the October Revolution, since they regard it as a pledge of their own deliverance.

It would be possible to note a number of fundamental questions indicating the line along which the October Revolution exercises its influence over the development of the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

1. The October Revolution is remarkable, first of all, for having broken through the front of world imperialism, deposed the imperialist bourgeoisie in one of the biggest capitalist countries and put the socialist proletariat in power.

The class of the wage workers, the class of the driven, the oppressed and exploited, has risen *for the first time* in the history of mankind to the position of a *ruling* class, setting a contagious example to the proletarians of all countries.

This means that the October Revolution *has opened up* a new epoch, an epoch of *proletarian* revolutions in the countries of *imperialism.*

It took the tools and means of production away from the landlords and capitalists and turned them into collective property, thus opposing socialist property to bourgeois property. It thereby exposed the lie of the capitalists that bourgeois property is inviolable, sacred, eternal.

It has wrested the power from the bourgeoisie, deprived the bourgeoisie of political rights, destroyed the bourgeois state machinery and transferred the power to the soviets, thus opposing the socialist rule of the soviets, as a *proletarian* democracy, to bourgeois parliamentarism, as *capitalist* democracy. Lafargue was right when he stated, as far back as 1887, that the very next

day after the revolution "all former capitalists would be deprived of the elective franchise." By that very means the October Revolution has exposed the lie of the Social-Democrats about the possibility of a peaceful transition now to socialism through bourgeois parliamentarism.

However, the October Revolution did not, and could not, stop there. Having destroyed the old, the bourgeois world, it began to build a new, a socialist world. The ten years of October Revolution are years of construction of the Party, the trade unions, the soviets, the co-operatives, cultural organizations, transport, industry, the Red Army. The undoubted successes of socialism in the U.S.S.R. on the construction front have visibly shown that the proletariat *can* successfully govern the country *without* the bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie, that it *can* successfully build industry *without* the bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie, that it *can* successfully guide the whole of the national economy *without* the bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie, that it *can* successfully build socialism in spite of the capitalist encirclement. The old "theory" to the effect that the exploited cannot do without the exploiters, just as the head or other parts of the body cannot get along without a stomach, is not only the idea of Menenius Agrippa, the famous Roman senator of ancient history. This "theory" is now the cornerstone of the political "philosophy" of social-democracy in general, of the social-democratic policy of *coalition* with the imperialist bourgeoisie—in particular. This "theory" which has acquired the character of a prejudice, now presents one of the greatest obstacles on the path of the revolutionization of the proletariat in the capitalist countries. One of the most important results of the October Revolution is the fact that it dealt that false "theory" a mortal blow.

Is there still any need to prove that such and similar results of the October Revolution could not, and cannot, remain without serious effect on the revolutionary movement of the working class in capitalist countries?

Such generally known facts as the progressive growth of communism in the capitalist countries, the growth of the sympathy of the proletarians of all countries with the working class of the

U.S.S.R.; finally, the influx of the workers' delegations into the Land of the Soviets, prove beyond a doubt that the seeds sown by the October Revolution already begin to bear fruit.

2. The October Revolution has shaken imperialism not only in the centres of its domination, not only in the "mother countries." It also dealt blows at the rears of imperialism, its periphery, by having undermined the domination of imperialism in the colonial and dependent countries.

Having overthrown the landlords and the capitalists, the October Revolution has broken the chains of national-colonial oppression and freed from it without exception all the oppressed nations of a vast state. The proletariat cannot free itself without liberating the oppressed nations. It is a characteristic trait of the October Revolution that it carried out these national-colonial revolutions in the U.S.S.R. not under the flag of national animosities and international conflicts, but under the flag of mutual trust and fraternal *rapprochement* between the workers and peasants of the various nationalities in the U.S.S.R.; not in the name of *nationalism*, but in the name of *internationalism*.

It is precisely because the national-colonial revolution took place in our country under the leadership of the proletariat and under the banner of internationalism, that the pariah nations, the slave nations, for the *first time* in the history of mankind have risen to the position of nations which are *really* free and *really* equal, thereby setting a contagious example to the nations of the whole world.

This means that the October Revolution has *ushered in* a new epoch, an epoch of *colonial* revolutions, which are carried out in the *oppressed countries* of the world in *alliance* with the proletariat and *under the leadership of the proletariat*.

Formerly it was the "accepted idea" that from time immemorial the world has been divided into inferior and superior races, into blacks and whites, that the former are incapable of assimilating civilization and are doomed to be objects of exploitation, and that the latter are the only exponents of civilization, whose mission it is to exploit the former. Now this legend must be regarded as shattered to pieces and rejected. One of the most

important results of the October Revolution is that it dealt that legend a mortal blow, having shown in practice that the liberated non-European nations, drawn into the channel of Soviet progress, are capable of promoting a *really* progressive culture and a *really* progressive civilization no less than the European nations.

Formerly it was the "accepted idea" that the only method of liberating the oppressed nations was the method of *bourgeois nationalism*, a method of nations seceding one from the other, a method of disuniting them, a method of intensifying national animosities between the toiling masses of various nations. Now this legend must be regarded as disproved. One of the most important results of the October Revolution is the fact that it dealt that legend a mortal blow, having shown in practice the possibility and expediency of the *proletarian, international* method of liberating the oppressed nations as the only correct method, having shown in practice the possibility and expediency of a *fraternal alliance* between the workers and peasants of the most diverse nations on the principles of *voluntariness* and *internationalism*. The existence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which is the prototype of the future amalgamation of the toilers of all countries in a single world economy, cannot but serve as direct proof of this.

Beyond question these and similar results of the October Revolution could not and cannot remain without serious effect on the revolutionary movement in the colonial and dependent countries. Facts like the growth of the revolutionary movement of the oppressed nations, in China, in Indonesia, in India, etc., and the growth of sympathy with the U.S.S.R. among these nations undoubtedly bear this out.

The era of undisturbed exploitation and oppression of the colonies and dependent countries *is gone*.

The era of emancipatory revolutions in the colonies and dependent countries, the era of the awakening of the *proletariat* in these countries, the era of its *hegemony* in the revolution, *has begun*.

3. By sowing the seeds of revolution, both in the centres of imperialism and in its rear, by weakening the power of imperial-

ism in the "mother countries" and undermining its domination in the colonies, the October Revolution has jeopardized the very existence of world capitalism *as a whole.*

While the spontaneous development of capitalism in the conditions of imperialism has grown over—owing to its unevenness, owing to the inevitability of conflicts and armed clashes, owing, finally, to the unprecedented imperialist slaughter—into the process of the "decay" and the "withering away" of capitalism, the October Revolution and the resultant secession of an enormous country from the world system of capitalism could not but accelerate this process, washing away, bit by bit, the very foundations of world imperialism.

More than that. In undermining imperialism, the October Revolution concomitantly established a powerful and open *base* for the world revolutionary movement, represented by the first proletarian dictatorship, a base which it *never had before* and on which it can now rely. It created that powerful and open *centre* of the world revolutionary movement which it *never possessed* before and around which it now can rally and organize a *united revolutionary front of the proletarians and of the oppressed nations of all countries against imperialism.*

This means, first of all, that the October Revolution inflicted a mortal wound on world capitalism, a wound from which it will never recover. It is precisely for this reason that capitalism will never recover the "equilibrium," the "stability" that it possessed prior to October. Capitalism may become partly stabilized, it may rationalize its production, turn over the administration of the country to fascism, hold the working class down for a while, but it will never recover the "tranquillity," the "assurance," the "equilibrium" and the "stability" that it flaunted before, for the crisis of world capitalism has reached the stage of development where the flames of revolution are bound to break through, now in the centres of imperialism, now in the periphery, reducing to naught the capitalist patchwork and daily bringing the fall of capitalism nearer. Exactly as we find it in the famous fable: "Pull the donkey's tale out of the mire and his nose will be stuck in it, pull out the nose and his tail will be in it."

This means, in the second place, that the October Revolution raised the force, the relative importance, the courage and the preparedness to fight of the oppressed classes of the whole world to a certain level, forcing the ruling classes to reckon with them as a *new,* an important factor. Now it is no longer possible to look upon the toiling masses of the world as a "blind mob," groping in the dark, devoid of all prospects, for the October Revolution raised a beacon for them which illumines their path and gives them prospects. Whereas formerly there was no *world-embracing* open forum where the aspirations and ambitions of the oppressed classes could be expounded and formulated, now such a forum exists in the form of the first proletarian dictatorship.

There is hardly room for doubt that the destruction of this forum would cast the gloom of unbridled dark reaction for a long time to come over the social and political life of the "progressive countries." It is impossible to deny that the mere fact of the existence of a "bolshevik state" exercises a restraining influence on the dark forces of reaction, thus facilitating the struggle of the oppressed classes for their liberation. This, properly speaking, explains the brutal hatred which the exploiters of all countries feel for the Bolsheviks. History repeats itself, though on a new basis. Just as formerly, during the period of the fall of *feudalism* the word "Jacobin" evoked horror and loathing among the aristocrats of all countries, so now in the period of the fall of *capitalism,* the word "Bolshevik" evokes horror and loathing in bourgeois countries. And *vice versa,* just as formerly Paris was a place of refuge and school for the revolutionary representatives of the rising *bourgeoisie,* so now Moscow is the place of refuge and school for the revolutionary representatives of the rising *proletariat.* Hatred for the Jacobins did not save feudalism from foundering. Can there be any doubt that hatred for the Bolsheviks will not save capitalism from inevitable perdition?

The era of the "stabilization" of capitalism *has gone,* taking along with it the legend of the unshakable character of the bourgeois order.

The era of the downfall of capitalism *has begun.*

The October Revolution is not only a revolution in the domain of economic and social-political relations. It is at the same time a revolution in the minds, a revolution in the ideology, of the working class. The October Revolution was born and strengthened under the flag of Marxism, under the banner of the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, under the flag of Leninism, which is the Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and of proletarian revolutions. It marks, therefore, the victory of Marxism over reformism, the victory of Leninism over social-democracy, the victory of the Third International over the Second International.

The October Revolution erected an impassable barrier between Marxism and social-democracy, between the policy of Leninism and the policy of social-democracy. Formerly, *prior to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat*, social-democracy could disport the flag of Marxism without openly repudiating the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but at the same time without doing anything whatsoever to bring the realization of this idea nearer, for such behaviour on the part of social-democracy did not jeopardize capitalism in the least. Then, in that period, social-democracy was formally merged, or almost merged, with Marxism. Now, *after the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat*, when it became patent to all *whither* Marxism leads, *what* its victory could mean, social-democracy was no longer able to disport the flag of Marxism, could no longer flirt with the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat without putting capitalism in jeopardy to a certain extent. Having long ago broken with the spirit of Marxism, it found itself forced to break also with the flag of Marxism, it openly and unambiguously took the stand against the October Revolution, the offspring of Marxism, against the first dictatorship of the proletariat in the world. Now it had to, and really did, dissociate itself from Marxism, for under present conditions it is impossible to call oneself a Marxist without openly and self-sacrificingly supporting the first proletarian dictatorship in the world, without conducting a revolutionary struggle against one's own bourgeoisie, without creating the conditions for the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat in one's own country. A chasm opened up between social-democracy and Marx-

ism. Henceforth, the *only* exponent and bulwark of Marxism will be Leninism, communism.

However, matters did not rest there. After dissociating social-democracy from Marxism, the October Revolution went further, by throwing off social-democracy into the camp of the outright defenders of capitalism, *against* the first proletarian dictatorship in the world. When the Adlers and Bauers, the Welses and Levys, the Longuets and Blums abuse the "Soviet regime" and extol parliamentary "democracy," these gentlemen mean by this that they fight and will fight *for* the re-establishment of the capitalist order in the U.S.S.R., *for* the preservation of capitalist slavery in the "civilized" states. The present social-democracy is the *ideological prop* of capitalism. Lenin was absolutely right when he said that the present social-democratic politicians are "real agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class," that in the "civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie" they will inevitably range themselves "on the side of the Versailles people against the Communards." *It is impossible to put an end to capitalism without putting an end to social-democracy in the labour movement.* Therefore, the era of the dying off of capitalism is at the same time the era of the dying off of social-democracy in the labour movement. The great importance of the October Revolution lies, incidentally, in the fact that it marks the inevitable victory of Leninism over social-democracy in the world labour movement.

The era of the domination of the Second International and of social-democracy in the labour movement *has come to an end.*

The era of the domination of Leninism and of the Third International *has begun.*

Pravda, No. 255, November 6-7, 1927.

ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL DIVERGENCES BETWEEN THE PARTY AND THE TROTSKY-ZINOVIEV OPPOSITION *BLOC*

(From the Political Report of the Central Committee to the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., December 3, 1927)

THE *question of the possibility of victorious socialist construction in our country.* I shall not refer to documents and declarations of the opposition on this subject. They are known to all and there is no need to repeat them. It is obvious to all that the opposition denies the possibility of the victorious construction of socialism in our country. And by denying this possibility, it slides down directly and openly to the position of the Mensheviks. Such a line taken by the opposition on the question at issue is not new, for its present leaders, Kamenev and Zinoviev, started with this line when they refused to proceed to the October uprising. They said outright in those days that by raising the insurrection we were heading toward ruin, that it was necessary to wait for the Constituent Assembly, that conditions were not ripe for socialism and would not be ripe soon. Trotsky started with the same line when he proceeded to the uprising. For he stated directly that unless the victorious proletarian revolution in the West would be in time to assist in the none too distant future, it would be stupid to imagine that revolutionary Russia could hold its own against conservative Europe.

And, indeed, how, on the one hand, did Kamenev and Zinoviev proceed to the uprising, how did Trotsky on the other, how did Lenin and the Party proceed on the third hand? This is a very interesting question, comrades, and it is worth while saying a few words about it. You know that Kamenev and Zinoviev went to the uprising only when shown the rod. Lenin drove

them with a rod, threatening to expel them from the Party (*laughter, applause*) and they were constrained to drag their feet to the uprising (*laughter, applause*). Trotsky went to the uprising voluntarily. However, he did not just go, but went with a slight reservation, which already at that time brought him near to Kamenev and Zinoviev. It is of interest that it was precisely before October, in June 1917, that Trotsky deemed it appropriate to republish in Leningrad his old pamphlet *The Peace Program*, as if he wanted to say by that that he was going to the uprising under his own flag. What does he say in this pamphlet? He enters into a polemic there with Lenin on the question of the possibility of victory for socialism in a single country, considers this thought of Lenin's wrong and asserts that power will have to be seized, but that unless assistance from the victorious West European workers will arrive in time, it is a forlorn hope to imagine that revolutionary Russia can hold its own in the teeth of a conservative Europe, and whoever does not believe in Trotsky's criticism suffers from national narrow-mindedness. The following is an extract from Trotsky's pamphlet of that period:

> Without waiting for others we begin and continue the struggle on the national soil, in the full conviction that our initiative will lend impetus to the struggle in other countries; and if this should not take place, it would be hopeless to think—as is borne out both by the experience of history and by theoretical considerations—that revolutionary Russia, for instance, would be able to hold its own in the teeth of a conservative Europe. . . . To examine the perspectives of a social revolution within national confines would mean to fall victim to that same national narrow-mindedness which constitutes the essence of social-patriotism. (Trotsky, "The Year 1917," *Collected Works* [Russian], Vol. III, Part I, p. 90.)

Here, comrades, you have the Trotskyist slight reservation, which largely helps us to understand the roots and the subsoil of his present *bloc* with Kamenev and Zinoviev.

And how did Lenin go to the uprising, how did the Party go? Also with just a slight reservation? No, Lenin and his Party went to the uprising without reservations. The following is an extract from a remarkable article by Lenin entitled "The Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution," published abroad in September 1917:

Socialism victorious in one country does not by any means at one stroke preclude all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes wars. The development of capitalism proceeds with the greatest unevenness in the various countries. This cannot be otherwise under commodity production. It inevitably follows from this that socialism cannot be victorious in *all* countries simultaneously. It will be victorious first in one or in several countries while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pro-bourgeois. This ought to give rise not only to friction but to an outright endeavour by the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the socialist state. In such event war on our part would be legitimate and just. It would be a war for socialism, for the liberation of other peoples from the bourgeoisie. (*Cf.* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX, "The War Program of the Proletarian Revolution.")

You see that we have here a totally different line. Whereas Trotsky went to the uprising with just a slight reservation which brings him close to Kamenev and Zinoviev, by asserting that proletarian rule cannot in itself be something special unless timely aid will be forthcoming from the outside, Lenin, on the other hand, went to the uprising without reservations, asserting that the proletarian rule in our country must serve as a basis for helping the proletarians of other countries to free themselves from the yoke of the bourgeoisie.

That is how the Bolsheviks marched to the October uprising, and that is why Trotsky and Kamenev together with Zinoviev found common language in the tenth year of the October Revolution.

The talk between Trotsky, on the one hand, and Kamenev and Zinoviev on the other, when they formed the opposition *bloc*, could be rendered in the form of a dialogue:

Kamenev and Zinoviev to Trotsky:

"You see, dear comrade, we were right after all when we said that we should not have made the October uprising, that we should have waited for the Constituent Assembly, etc. Now everyone sees that the country is degenerating, the government is degenerating, we are headed towards ruin and there will be no socialism in our country. We should not have gone to the uprising. And you went to the uprising voluntarily. You committed a big blunder."

Trotsky in reply:

"No, my dear colleagues, you do not do me justice. True, I

did go to the uprising, but you forgot to mention how I went. You see, I did not go outright but with a reservation." (*General laughter.*) "And inasmuch as it has become apparent now that no help can be expected from anywhere outside, it is obvious that things are heading towards ruin as I had predicted at the time in *The Peace Program.*"

Zinoviev and Kamenev:

"Well, maybe that is so. We have forgotten about that slight reservation. Now it is clear that our *bloc* has been substantiated ideologically." (*General laughter, applause.*)

That is how the line of the opposition in regard to the denial of the possibility of victorious socialist construction in our country took shape.

And what does this line denote? It denotes a spirit of capitulation. To whom? Obviously to the capitalist elements in our country. To whom else? To the world bourgeoisie. And the Left phrases, the revolutionary gesticulation—what became of them? They are scattered like the dust. Give our opposition a good shaking, strip it of its revolutionary phrases and you will find the spirit of capitulation at the bottom of it. (*Applause.*)

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